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THE STUDENTS' HANDY EDITION.

THE WORKS

OF

SHAKESPEARE:

THE TEXT CAREFULLY RESTORED ACCORDING TO
THE FIRST EDITIONS; WITH INTRODUCTIONS,
NOTES ORIGINAL AND SELECTED, AND
A LIFE OF THE POET;

BY THE

REV. H. N. HUDSON, A.M.

REVISED EDITION, WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES.

IN TWELVE VOLUMES.

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INTRODUCTION

TO

MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

MEASURE FOR MEASURE stands the fourth in the list of Comedies in the folio of 1623, where it was first printed. Like the four plays included in our first volume, the divisions and subdivisions of acts and scenes are carefully noted in the original edition, and at the end is a list of the persons represented, under the usual heading, "The names of all the actors." Though the general scope and sense of the dialogue are every where clear enough, there are several obscure and doubtful words and passages, which cause us to regret, more than in any of the preceding plays, the want of earlier impressions to illustrate, and rectify, or establish, the text. As it is, the right reading in some places can scarce be cleared of uncertainty, or placed beyond controversy.

The strongly-marked peculiarity in the language, cast of thought, and moral temper of Measure for Measure, have invested the play with great psychological interest, and bred a strange curiosity among critics to connect it in some way with the author's mental history; with some supposed crisis in his feelings and experience. Hence the probable date of its composition was for a long time argued more strenuously than the subject would otherwise seem to justify; and, as often falls out in such cases, the more the critics argued the point, the farther they were from coming to an agreement. But, what is not a little remarkable, the best thinkers have here struck widest of the truth; the dull matter-of-fact critics have borne the palm away from their more philosophical brethren; — an edifying instance how little the brightest speculation can do in questions properly falling within the domain of facts. Tieck and Ulrici, proceeding mainly upon internal evidence, fix the date somewhere between 1609 and 1612; and it is quite curious to observe how confident and positive they are in their inferences: Ulrici, after stating the reasons of Tieck for 1612, says, — "The later origin of the piece — certainly it did not precede 1609 — is

vouched still more strongly by the profound masculine earnestness which pervades it, and by the prevalence of the same tone of feeling which led Shakespeare to abandon the life and pursuits of London for his native town."

Until since these conclusions were put forth, the English critics, in default of other data, grounded their reasonings upon certain probable allusions to contemporary matters; especially those passages which express the Duke's fondness for "the life remov'd," and his aversion to being greeted by crowds of people: and Chalmers, a very considerable instance of critical dulness, had the sagacity to discover a sort of portrait-like resemblance in the Duke to King James I. As the King was undeniably a much better theologian than statesman or governor, the circumstance of the Duke's appearing so much more at home in the cowl and hood than in his ducal robes certainly lends some credit to this discovery. The King's unamiable repugnance to being gazed upon by throngs of admiring subjects is thus spoken of by a contemporary writer: "In his public appearance, especially in his sports, the accesses of the people made him so impatient, that he often dispersed them with frowns, that we may not say with curses." And his unhandsome bearing towards the crowds which, prompted by eager loyalty, flocked forth to hail his accession, is noted by several historians. But he was a pretty liberal, and, for the time, judicious encourager of the drama, as well as of other learned delectations; and with those who sought or had tasted his patronage it was natural that these symptoms of weakness, or of something worse, should pass for tokens of a wise superiority to the dainties of popular applause.

All which renders it quite probable that the Poet may have had an eye to the King in the passages cited by Malone in support of his conjecture.

> "I love the people,
> But do not like to stage me to their eyes:
> Though it do well, I do not relish well
> Their loud applause and *aves* vehement;
> Nor do I think the man of safe discretion
> That does affect it."
>
> "And even so
> The general, subject to a well-wish'd king,
> Quit their own part, and in obsequious fondness
> Crowd to his presence, where their untaught love
> Must needs appear offence."

The allusion here being granted, Malone's inference that the play was probably made soon after the King's accession, and before the effect of his unlooked-for austerity on this score had spent itself, was natural enough. Nor is the conjecture of Ulrici and others without weight, "that Shakespeare was led to the compo-

sition of the play by the rigoristic sentiments and arrogant virtue of the Puritans." And in this view several points of the main action might be aptly suggested at the time in question ; for the King had scarcely set foot in England but he began to be worried by the importunities of that remarkable people, who had been feeding upon the hope, that by the sole exercise of his prerogative he would cast out surplice, Liturgy, and Episcopacy, and revolutionize the Church up to the Presbyterian model ; it being a prime notion of theirs, that with the truth a minority, however small, was better than a majority, however large, without it.

Whether this view be fully warranted or not, it has been much strengthened by a recent discovery. The play is now known to have been acted at court December 26, 1604. For this knowledge we are indebted to Edmund Tylney's "Account of the Revels at Court," preserved in the Audit Office, Somerset House, and lately edited by Mr. Peter Cunningham. Tylney was Master of the Revels from 1579 to 1610; and in his account of expenses for the year beginning in October, 1604, occurs the following entry: "By His Majesty's players: On St. Stephen's night in the Hall a play called Measure for Measure." In a column headed "The Poets which made the Plays," our author is set down as "Mr. Shaxberd;" the writer not taking pains to know the right spelling of a name, the mentioning of which was to be the sole cause that his own should be remembered in after ages and on other continents.

The date of the play being so far ascertained, all the main probabilities allegeable from the play itself readily fall into harmony therewith. And it is rather remarkable that Measure for Measure most resembles some other plays, known to have been written about the same time, in those very characteristics which led the German critics to fix upon a later date. Which shows how weak, in such cases, the internal evidence of style, temper, and spirit is by itself, and yet how strong in connection with the external evidence of facts.

No question is made, that for some particulars in the plot and story of Measure for Measure the Poet was ultimately indebted to Giraldi Cinthio, an Italian novelist of the sixteenth century. The original story forms the eighty-fifth in his *Hecatommithi*, or Hundred Tales. A youth named Ludovico is there overtaken in the same fault as Claudio: Juriste, a magistrate highly reputed for wisdom and justice, passes sentence of death upon him ; and Epitia, Ludovico's sister, a virgin of rare gifts and graces, goes to pleading for her brother's life. Casting herself at the governor's feet, her beauty and eloquence, made doubly potent by the tears of suffering affection, have the same effect upon him as Isabella's upon Angelo. His proposals are rejected with scorn and horror ; but the lady, overcome by the pathetic entreaties of her brother, at last yields to them under a solemn promise of marriage. His object being gained, the wicked man commits a double vow

breach, neither marrying the lady nor sparing her brother. She carries her cause to the Emperor, by whom Juriste is convicted, forced to marry her, and then sentenced to death; but is at last pardoned at the suit of Epitia, who is now as earnest and eloquent for her husband as she had been for her brother. Her holy and heroic conduct touches him with remorse, and finally proves as effective in redeeming his character as it was in redeeming his life.

As early as 1578, this tale of Cinthio's was dramatized after a sort by George Whetstone. The title of Whetstone's performance runs thus: "The right excellent and famous History of Promos and Cassandra, divided into Comical Discourses." In the conduct of the story Whetstone varies somewhat from his model; as may be seen by the following abstract of his argument:

In the city of Julio, then under the rule of Corvinus, King of Hungary, there was a law that for incontinency the man should lose his head, and the woman be marked out for infamy by her dress. Through the indulgence of magistrates this severe law came to be little regarded. At length the government falling into the hands of Lord Promos, he revived the terrible statute, and, a youth named Andrugio being convicted of the fault in question, resolved to visit the penalties in their utmost rigour upon both him and his partner in guilt. Andrugio had a sister of great virtue and accomplishment, named Cassandra, who undertook to sue for his life. Her good behaviour, great beauty, and the sweet order of her talk wrought so far with the governor as to induce a short reprieve; but, his love soon turning into lust, he set down the spoil of her honour as the ransom; but she, abhorring both him and his suit, could by no persuasion be won to his wish. Unable, however, to stand out against the pathetic pleadings of her brother, she at last yielded to the wicked man's proposal, upon condition that he should pardon her brother and then marry her. This he solemnly vowed to do; but, his wish being gained, instead of keeping his vows, he ordered the jailer to present Cassandra with her brother's head. The jailer, knowing what the governor had done, and touched with the outcries of Andrugio, took the head of a felon just executed, and set the other at liberty. Cassandra, thinking the head to be her brother's, was at the point to kill herself for grief at this treachery, but spared that stroke to be avenged of the traitor. She devised to make her case known to the King, and he forthwith hastened to do justice upon Promos, ordering that to repair the lady's honor he should marry her, and then for his crime against the state lose his head. No sooner was Cassandra a wife, than all her rhetoric of eye, tongue, and action was tasked to procure the pardon of her husband; but the King, tendering the public good more than hers, denied her suit. At length Andrugio, overcome by his sister's grief, made himself known; for he had all the while been about the place in disguise; whereupon the King, to honour the virtues of Cassandra, pardoned both him and Promos.

In 1582 Whetstone published his Heptameron of Civil Discourses, containing a prose version of the same tale. He was a writer of learning and talent, but not such that even the instructions of Shakespeare could have made him capable of dramatic excellence; and, as he had no such benefit, his performance, as might be expected, is insipid and worthless enough. It is observable that he deviates most from Cinthio in managing to bring Andrugio off alive; and from Shakespeare's concurring with him herein it may be fairly inferred that the borrowings were from him, not from the original author. The Poet, moreover, represents the illicit meeting of Claudio and Juliet as taking place under the shield of a solemn betrothment; which very much softens their fault, as marriage bonds were already upon them, and proportionably heightens the injustice of Angelo, as it brings upon him the guilt of making the law responsible for his own arbitrary rigour. Beyond this outline of the story, it does not appear that Shakespeare took any thing from Whetstone more than a few slight hints and casual expressions. And a comparison of the two performances were very far from abating the Poet's fame; it being more creditable to have lifted the story out of the mire into such a region of art and poetry than to have invented it. The main original feature in the plot of Measure for Measure is the part of Mariana, which puts a new life into the whole, and purifies it almost into another nature; as it prevents the soiling of Isabella's holy womanhood, suggests an apt reason for the Duke's mysterious conduct, and yields a pregnant motive for Angelo's pardon, in that his life is thereby bound up with that of a wronged and innocent woman, whom his crimes are made the occasion of restoring to her rights and happiness, so that her virtue may be justly allowed to reprieve him from death.

In the comic scenes of Whetstone's play there is all the grossness of Measure for Measure, unredeemed by any thing that the utmost courtesy of language can call wit or humour: here, as Shakespeare took no help, so he can have no excuse, from his predecessor. But he probably saw that some such matter was required by the scheme of the work and the laws of artistic proportion; and as in these parts the truth and character are all his own, so he can scarce be blamed for not anticipating the delicacy of later times, there being none such in the most refined audiences of his day: and his choice of a subject so ugly in itself is amply justified by the many sweet lessons of virtue and wisdom which he has used it as an opportunity of delivering. To have trained and taught a barbarous tale of cruelty and lust into such a rich mellow fruitage of poetry and humanity, may be safely left to offset whatsoever of offence there may be in the play to modern taste. Perhaps the hardest thing to digest is the conduct of Angelo, as being too improbable for a work of art or fiction though history has recorded several instances substantially the

same,—of which probably the most familiar to English and American ears is that of Colonel Kirke, a lewd and inhuman minion of James II., whose crimes, however, did not exclude him from the favour of William III.

We have already referred to certain characteristics of style and temper which this play shares with several others written about the same period, and which have been thought to mark some crisis in the Poet's life. It cannot well be denied that the plays in question have something of a peculiar spirit, which might aptly suggest that some rude uncivil shock must have untuned the melody of his soul; that some passage of bitter experience must have turned the sweet milk of his genius for a time into gall, and put him upon a course of harsh and ungentle thought. The matter is well stated by Mr. Hallam: "There seems to have been a period of Shakespeare's life when his heart was ill at ease, and ill content with the world or his own conscience: the memory of hours misspent, the pang of affection misplaced or unrequited, the experience of man's worser nature, which intercourse with ill-chosen associates peculiarly teaches; these, as they sank down into the depths of his great mind, seem not only to have inspired into it the conception of Lear and Timon, but that of one primary character, the censurer of mankind. This type is first seen in the philosophic melancholy of Jaques, gazing with an undiminished serenity, and with a gayety of fancy, though not of manners, on the follies of the world. It assumes a graver cast in the exiled Duke of the same play, and one rather more severe in the Duke of Measure for Measure. In all these, however, it is merely a contemplative philosophy. In Hamlet this is mingled with the impulses of a perturbed heart under the pressure of extraordinary circumstances; it shines no longer, as in the former characters, with a steady light, but plays in fitful coruscations amid feigned gayety and extravagance. In Lear, it is the flash of sudden inspiration across the incongruous imagery of madness; in Timon, it is obscured by the exaggerations of misanthropy." Mr. Verplanck speaks in a similar strain of "that portion of the author's life which was memorable for the production of Othello, with all its bitter passion; the additions to the original Hamlet, with their melancholy wisdom; probably of Timon, with his indignant and hearty scorn, and rebukes of the baseness of civilized society; and above all of Lear, with its dark pictures of unmixed, unmitigated guilt, and its terrible and prophet-like denunciations."

These words certainly carry much weight, and may go far to warrant the suggestion of the same authors, that the Poet was visited with some external calamity, which wrought itself into his moral frame; some assault of fortune, that wrenched his mind from its once smooth and happy course, causing it to recoil upon itself and brood over its own thoughts. Yet there are considerable difficulties besetting a theory of this kind. For there is no

proof that Timon, but much that Twelfth Night, was written during the period in question: besides, even in the plays referred to there is so much of unquestionable difference blended with the acknowledged likeness, as will greatly embarrass, if not quite defeat, such a theory. But whatsoever may have caused the peculiar tone, the darker cast of thought, in these plays, it is pleasing to know that that darkness passed away; the clear azure, soft sunshine, and serene sweetness of The Tempest and The Winter's Tale being unquestionably of a later date. And surely, in the life of so thoughtful a man as Shakespeare, there might well be, nay, there must needs have been, times when, without any special woundings or bruisings of fortune, his mind got fascinated by the awful mystery, the appalling presence of evil that haunts our fallen nature

That these hours, however occasioned, were more frequent at one period of his life than at others, is indeed probable. And it was equally natural that their coming should sometimes engage him in heart-tugging and brain-sweating efforts to scrutinize the inscrutable workings of human guilt, and thus stamp itself strongly upon the offspring of his mind. Thus, without any other than the ordinary progress of thoughtful spirits, we should naturally have a middle period, when the early enthusiasm of hope and successful endeavour had passed away, and before the deeper, calmer, but not less cheerful tranquillity of resignation had set in, the experienced insufficiency of man for himself having charmed the wrestlings of thought into repose, and his spirit having undergone the chastening and subduing power of life's sterner discipline.

In some such passage as this, then, we should rather presume the unique conception of Measure for Measure to have been wrought up in his mind. We say unique, because this is his only instance of comedy where the wit seems to foam and sparkle up from a fountain of bitterness; where even the humour is made pungent with sarcasm; and where the poetry is marked with tragic austerity. In none of his plays does he exhibit less of leaning upon pretexisting models, or a more manly negligence, perhaps sometimes carried to excess, of those lighter graces of manner which none but the greatest minds may safely despise. His genius is here out in all its colossal individuality, and he seems to have meant it should be so; as if he felt that he had now reached his mastership; as if a large experience and long testing of his powers had taught him a just self-reliance, and given him to know that, from being the offspring, he was to become the soul of his age; that from his accumulated and well-practised learnings he had built up a power to teach still nobler lessons; so that, instead of leaning any longer upon those who had gone before, he was to be himself a safe leaning-place for those that were to follow.

Accordingly, if we here miss something of what Wordsworth finely calls

> "That monumental grace
> Of Faith, which doth all passions tame

That Reason *should* control,
And shows in the untrembling frame
A statue of the soul;"

yet we have the wise though fearless grapplings and struggings of mind with thoughts too big for human mastery, whereby the imperfection was in due time to be outgrown. The thought is strong, and in its strength careless of appearances, and rather wishing than fearing to have its roughnesses seen: the style is rugged, irregular, abrupt, sometimes running into an almost forbidding sternness, but every where throbbing with life; the words, direct of movement, sudden and sure of result, always going right to the spot, and leaving none of their work undone: with but little of elaborate grace or finish, we have a few bold, deep strokes, where the want of finer softenings and shadings is more than made up by increased energy and expressiveness: often a rush and flood of thought is condensed and rammed into a line or clause, so that the life thereof beats and reverberates through the whole scene. Hence, perhaps, it is, in part, that so many axioms and "brief sententious precepts" of moral and political wisdom from this play have wrought themselves into the currency and familiarity of household words, and live for instruction or comfort in the memory of many who know nothing of their original source.

Whether from the nature of the subject, or the mode of treating it, or both, Measure for Measure is generally regarded as one of the least attractive, though most instructive, of Shakespeare's plays. Coleridge, in those precious fragments of his critical lectures, which now form our best text-book of English criticism, says,—"This play, which is Shakespeare's throughout, is to me the most painful — say rather, the only painful — part of his genuine works. The comic and tragic parts equally border on the μιαρόν,—the one being disgusting, the other horrible; and the pardon and marriage of Angelo not merely baffles the strong indignant claims of justice, (for cruelty, with lust and damnable baseness, cannot be forgiven, because we cannot conceive them as being morally repented of;) but it is likewise degrading to woman." This language, though there is much in other critics to bear it out, seems not a little stronger than the subject will fairly justify; and when, in his Table Talk, he says that "Isabella herself contrives to be unamiable, and Claudio is detestable," we can by no means go along with him.

It would seem indeed as if undue censure had often passed, not so much on the play itself, as upon some of the persons, from trying them by a moral standard which cannot be fairly applied to them, as they are not supposed to have any means of knowing it; or from not duly weighing all the circumstances, feelings, and motives under which they are represented as acting. Thus Ulrici speaks of Claudio as being guilty of seduction: which is surely

wide of the mark; it being clear enough, that by the standard of morality then and there approved, he was, as he considered himself, virtually married, though not admissible to all the rights of the married life; in accordance with what the Duke says to Mariana, that there would be no crime in her meeting with Angelo, because he was her "husband on a pre-contract." And who does not know that, in ancient times, the ceremony of betrothment conferred the marriage tie, but not the nuptials, so that the union of the parties was thenceforth firm in the eyes of the law itself? Mr. Hallam, in like sort, speaking of Isabella, says, — "One is disposed to ask, whether, if Claudio had been really executed, the spectator would not have gone away with no great affection for her; and at least we now feel that her reproaches against her miserable brother, when he clings to life like a frail and guilty being, are too harsh." In reply to the first part of which, we would venture to ask this accomplished critic whether she would not have suffered a still greater depreciation in his esteem, if she had yielded to Angelo's proposal. As to the second part, though we do indeed feel that Claudio were rather to be pitied than blamed, whatever course he had taken in so terrible an alternative, yet the conduct of his sister strikes us as every way creditable to her. Her reproaches were indeed too harsh, if they appeared to spring from any want of love; but as it is their very harshness does her honour, as it shows the natural workings of a tender and deep affection, in an agony of disappointment at being counselled, by one for whom she would die, to an act which she shrinks from with noble horror, and justly regards as worse than death. We have here the keen anguish of conflicting feelings venting itself in a severity which, though certainly undeserved, only serves to disclose the more impressively the treasured riches of her character. And the same judicious writer, after stating that, without the part of Mariana, "the story could not have had any thing like a satisfactory termination," goes on, — "Yet it is never explained how the Duke had become acquainted with this secret, and, being acquainted with it, how he had preserved his esteem and confidence in Angelo." But surely we are given to understand in the outset that the Duke has not preserved the esteem and confidence in question. In his first scene with friar Thomas, among his reasons for the action he has on foot, he makes special mention of this one:

> "Lord Angelo is precise;
> Stands at a guard with envy; scarce confesses
> That his blood flows, or that his appetite
> Is more to bread than stone: *hence shall we see,*
> *If power change purpose, what our seemers be*

thus inferring that his main purpose, in assuming the disguise of a monk, is to unmask the deputy, and demonstrate to others

what himself has long known. And the Duke throws out other hints of a belief or suspicion that Lord Angelo is angling for emolument or popular breath, and baiting his hook with great apparent strictness and sanctity of life; thus putting on sheep's clothing to the end that he may play the wolf with safety and success. Nor was there much cause for explaining how the Duke came by the secret concerning Mariana; it being enough that he knows it, that the knowledge thereof justifies his distrust, and that when the time comes he uses it for a good purpose; the latter part of the work thus throwing light on what has gone before, and the former preparing the mind for what is to follow. Nor is it unreasonable to presume that one of the Duke's motives for the stratagem was, that he was better able to understand the deputy's character than persuade others of it: for a man of his wisdom, even if he had no available facts in the case, could hardly be ignorant that an austerity so theatrical as Angelo's must needs be not so much a virtue as an art; and that one so forward to air his graces and *make* his light shine could scarce intend thereby any other glory than his own.

Yet Angelo is not so properly a hypocrite as a self-deceiver. For it is very considerable that he wishes to be, and sincerely thinks that he is what he affects and appears to be; as is plain from his consternation at the wickedness which opportunity awakens into conscious action within him. For a most searching and pregnant exposition of this type of character the reader may be referred to Bishop Butler's Sermon before the House of Lords on the 30th of January; where that great and good man, whose every sentence is an acorn of wisdom, speaks of a class of men who "try appearances upon themselves as well as upon the world, and with at least as much success; and choose to manage so as to make their own minds easy with their faults, which can scarce be done without management, rather than to mend them." Thus Angelo for self-ends imitates sanctity, and gets taken in by his own imitation. His original fault lay in forgetting or ignoring his own frailty. As a natural consequence, his "darling sin is pride that apes humility;" and his pride of virtue, his conceit of purity, "my gravity wherein (let no man hear me) I take pride," while it keeps him from certain vices, is itself a far greater vice than any it keeps him from; insomuch that Isabella's presence may almost be said to *elevate* him into lust. And perhaps the array of low and loathsome vices, which the Poet has clustered about him in the persons of Lucio, the Clown, and Mrs. Over-done, was necessary to make us feel how unspeakably worse than any or all of these is Angelo's pride of virtue. It can hardly be needful to add, that in Angelo this "mystery of iniquity" is depicted with a truth and sternness of pencil, that could scarce have been achieved but in an age fruitful in living examples of it.

The placing of Isabella, "a thing enskied and sainted,' and

who truly *is* all that Angelo seems, side by side with such a breathing shining mass of pitch, is one of those dramatic audacities wherein none perhaps but a Shakespeare could safely indulge. Of her character the most prolific hint that is given is what she says to the Duke, when he is urging her to fasten her ear on his advisings touching the part of Mariana: "I have spirit to do any thing that appears not foul in the truth of my spirit." That is, she cares not what face the action may wear to the world, nor how much reproach it may bring upon her from others, if it will only leave her the society, which she has never parted from, of a clean breast and an unsoiled conscience. In strict keeping with this, her character appears to us among the finest, in some respects the very finest in Shakespeare's matchless cabinet of female excellence. Called from the cloister, where she is on the point of taking the veil of earthly renouncement, to plead for her brother's life, she comes forth a saintly anchoress, clad in the sweet austere composures of womanhood, to throw the light of her virgin soul upon the dark, loathsome scenes and characters around her. With great strength of intellect and depth of feeling she unites an equal power of imagination, the whole being pervaded, quickened, and guided by a still, intense religious enthusiasm. And because her virtue is securely rooted and grounded in religion, therefore she never once thinks of it as her own, but only as a gift from the God whom she loves, and who is her only hope for the keeping of what she has. Which suggests the fundamental point of contrast between her and Angelo, whose virtue, if such it may be called, is nothing, nay, worse than nothing, because it is one of his own making, and has no basis but pride, which is itself but a bubble. Accordingly, there is a vestal beauty about her, to which we know of nothing equal save in the lives of some of the whitest saints. The power and pathos with which she pleads for her brother are well known. At first she is timid, distrustful of her powers, shrinking with modest awe of the law's appointed organ; and she seems drawn unawares into the heights of moral argument and the most sweetly-breathing strains of Gospel wisdom. Much of what she says has become domesticated wherever the English language is spoken, and would long since have grown old, if it were possible by any means to crush the freshness of immortal youth out of it.

The Duke has been rather hardly dealt with by critics. The Poet — than whom it would not be easy to find a better judge of what belongs to wisdom and goodness — seems to have meant him for a wise and good man; yet he has represented him as having rather more skill and pleasure in strategical arts and roundabout ways than is altogether compatible with such a character. Some of his alleged reasons for the action he is going about reflect no honour on him; but it is observable that the result does not approve them to have been his real ones: his conduct at the end infers better motives than his speech offered at the beginning;

which naturally suggests that there may have been more of purpose than of truth in his statement of them. A liberal, sagacious, and merciful prince, but with more of whim and caprice than suits the dignity of his place, humanity speaks richly from his lips; yet in his action the philosopher and divine is better shown than the statesman; and he seems to take a very questionable delight in moving about as an unseen providence, by secret counsels leading the wicked designs of others to safe and wholesome issues. Schlegel thinks "he has more pleasure in overhearing his subjects than in governing them in the usual way of princes;" and sets him down as an exception to the old proverb,—"A cowl does not make a monk:" and perhaps his princely virtues are somewhat obscured by the disguise which so completely transforms him into a monk. Whether he acts upon the wicked principle with which that fraternity is so often reproached, or not, it is pretty certain that some of his means can be justified by nothing but the end: so that if he be not himself wrong in what he does, he has no shield from the charge but the settled custom of the order whose functions he undertakes. Schlegel justly remarks, that "Shakespeare, amidst the rancour of religious parties, delights in painting monks, and always represents their influence as beneficial; there being in his plays none of the black and knavish specimens, which an enthusiasm for Protestantism, rather than poetical inspiration, has put some modern poets upon delineating. He merely gives his monks an inclination to be busy in the affairs of others, after renouncing the world for themselves; though in respect of pious frauds he does not make them very scrupulous." As to the Duke's pardon of Angelo, though Justice seems to cry out against the act, yet in the premises it were still more unjust in him to do otherwise; the deception he has practised upon Angelo in the substituting of Mariana having plainly bound him to the course he takes. For the same power whereby he effects this could easily have prevented Angelo's crime; and to punish the offence after thus withholding the means of prevention were obviously wrong; not to mention how his proceedings here involve an innocent person, so that he ought to spare Angelo for her sake, if not for his own. Nor does it strike us as very prudent to set bounds to the grace of repentance, or to say what amount of sin must render a man incapable of it. All which may in some measure explain the Duke's severity to the smaller crime of Lucio after his clemency to the greater one of Angelo.

Lucio is one of those mixed characters, such as are often generated amidst the refinements of city life, in whom low and disgusting vices, and a frivolity still more offensive, are blended with engaging manners and some manly sentiments. Thus he appears a gentleman and a blackguard by turns, and, what is more, does really unite something of these seemingly incompatible qualities. With a true eye and a just sympathy for virtue in others, yet, so

far as we can see, he cares not a jot to have it in himself. And while his wanton, waggish levity seems too much for any generous feeling to consist with, still he shows a strong and hearty friendship for Claudio; as if on purpose to teach us how "the web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together."

Dr. Johnson rather oddly remarks, that "the comic scenes are natural and pleasing;" not indeed but that the remark is true enough, but that it seems rather out of character. And if these scenes please, it is not so much from any fund of mirthful exhilaration, or any genial gushes of wit and humour, as from the reckless, unsympathizing freedom, not unmingled with touches of scorn, with which the deformities of mankind are shown up. The contrast between the right-thoughted, well-meaning Claudio, a generous spirit walled in with overmuch infirmity, and Barnardine, a frightful petrifaction of humanity, "careless, reckless, and fearless of what is past, present, or to come," is in the Poet's boldest manner.

Nevertheless, the general current of things is far from musical, and the issues greatly disappoint the reader's feelings. The drowsy Justice, which we expect and wish to see awakened, and set in living harmony with Mercy, apparently relapses at last into a deeper sleep than ever. Our loyalty to Womanhood is not a little wounded by the humiliations to which poor Mariana stoops, at the ghostly counsels of her spiritual guide, that she may twine her life with that of the cursed hypocrite who has wronged her sex so deeply. That, amid the general impunity of so much crime, the mere telling of some ridiculous lies to the Duke about himself should draw down a disproportionate severity upon Lucio, the lively, unprincipled jester and wag, who might well be let pass as a privileged character, makes the whole look more as if done in mockery of justice than in honour of mercy. Except, indeed, the noble unfolding of Isabella, scarce any thing turns out as we would have it; nor are we much pleased at seeing her diverted from the quiet tasks and holy contemplations which she is so able and worthy to enjoy.

It will not be amiss to add, that the title of this play is apt to give a wrong impression of its scope and purpose. *Measure for Measure* is in itself equivocal; but the subject-matter here fixes it to be taken in the sense, not of the old Jewish proverb, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," but of the divine precept, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Thus the title falls in with that noble line by Coleridge, "What nature makes us mourn, she bids us heal;" or with a similar passage in the Merchant of Venice, "We do pray for mercy, and that same prayer doth teach us all to render the deeds of mercy."

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

VINCENTIO, Duke of Vienna.
ANGELO, Lord Deputy in the Duke's absence.
ESCALUS, an ancient Lord, joined with ANGELO in the Deputation.
CLAUDIO, a young Gentleman.
LUCIO, a Fantastic.
Two other like Gentlemen.
VARRIUS, a Gentleman, Servant to the Duke.
Provost.
THOMAS, } Two Friars.
PETER, }
A Justice.
ELBOW, a simple Constable.
FROTH, a foolish Gentleman.
Clown, Servant to Mrs. Over-done.
ABHORSON, an Executioner.
BARNARDINE, a dissolute Prisoner.

ISABELLA, Sister to CLAUDIO.
MARIANA, betrothed to ANGELO.
JULIET, beloved by CLAUDIO.
FRANCISCA, a Nun.
MISTRESS OVER-DONE, a Bawd.

Lords, Gentlemen, Guards, Officers, and other Attendants.

SCENE, Vienna.

MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

ACT I.

SCENE I. An Apartment in the DUKE's Palace

Enter DUKE, ESCALUS, *Lords, and Attendants.*

Duke. ESCALUS, —

Escal. My lord.

Duke. Of government the properties to unfold,
Would seem in me t'affect speech and discourse;
Since I am put to know,[1] that your own science
Exceeds, in that, the lists[2] of all advice
My strength can give you: Then, no more remains,
But that, to your sufficiency, as your worth is able,
And let them work.[3] The nature of our people,

[1] That is, informed; much the same as our phrase, *given to understand*. H.

[2] *Lists* are bounds, or limits.

[3] An instance of obscurity, such as often occurs in this play, resulting from an overcrowding of thought. It hath been generally supposed that some words must have dropped out in the hands of the transcriber or compositor. Of course no two editors can agree what those words were. Mr. Halliwell thinks to *relieve* the passage of darkness by printing *task* instead of *that*, — a correction which he found written by some unknown hand in an old copy of the play belonging to Mr. Tunno. But if we understand *that* as referring to the commission, which the Duke holds in his hand, as he afterwards says, — "There is our commission," — the passage, though still obscure, will appear complete as it stands. The meaning will then be, — "Since, then, your worth is ample, nothing is wanting to qualify you, to make you sufficient for the office, but this our commission, and let *them*, that is, the ability, which is in you, and the authority, which I confer upon you, work." H.

Our city's institutions, and the terms
For common justice, y'are as pregnant in,[4]
As art and practice hath enriched any
That we remember: There is our commission,
From which we would not have you warp. — Call hither,
I say, bid come before us Angelo. —
[*Exit an Attendant*
What figure of us think you he will bear?
For you must know we have with special soul
Elected him our absence to supply;
Lent him our terror, dress'd him with our love;
And given his deputation all the organs
Of our own power: What think you of it?

Escal. If any in Vienna be of worth
To undergo such ample grace and honour
It is lord Angelo.

Enter ANGELO.

Duke. Look, where he comes.

Ang. Always obedient to your grace's will,
I come to know your pleasure.

Duke. Angelo,
There is a kind of character in thy life,
That, to the observer, doth thy history
Fully unfold. Thyself and thy belongings
Are not thine own so proper,[5] as to waste
Thyself upon thy virtues, them on thee.
Heaven doth with us, as we with torches do;
Not light them for themselves: for if our virtues

[4] That is, ready, skilful in. *Terms*, in the line before, Blackstone explains to mean the technical language of the courts; and he adds, — "An old book, called *Les Termes de la Ley*, was in Shakespeare's day the accidence of young students in the law." The same book was used in Blackstone's time. H.

[5] So much thy own property.

Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike
As if we had them not. Spirits are not finely touch'd,
But to fine issues;[6] nor nature never lends[7]
The smallest scruple of her excellence,
But, like a thrifty goddess, she determines
Herself the glory of a creditor,
Both thanks and use.[8] But I do bend my speech
To one that can my part in him advértise:[9]
Hold, therefore, Angelo:[10]
In our remove, be thou at full ourself;
Mortality and Mercy in Vienna
Live in thy tongue and heart:[11] Old Escalus,
Though first in question, is thy secondary:
Take thy commission.

Ang. Now, good my lord,
Let there be some more test made of my metal,
Before so noble and so great a figure
Be stamp'd upon it.

Duke. No more evasion:
We have with a leaven'd[12] and prepared choice
Proceeded to you; therefore take your honours.
Our haste from hence is of so quick condition,

[6] That is, to noble ends, to high purposes. H.

[7] Two negatives, not making an affirmative, are common in Shakespeare's writings. So in Julius Cæsar: "*Nor* to *no* Roman else."

[8] *Use* in the mercantile sense of *interest*. H.

[9] That is, one that can himself set forth what pertains to him as my substitute. H.

[10] Tyrwhitt thinks the Duke here checks himself, — *Hold, therefore*: and that *Angelo* begins a new sentence. But *hold* seems addressed to Angelo; the sense being, — "Hold, therefore, our power;" referring to the commission which the Duke has in his hand. H.

[11] That is, I delegate to thy tongue the power of pronouncing sentence of death, and to thy heart the privilege of exercising mercy.

[12] A choice *mature, concocted, fermented*; that is, not hasty but considerate.

That it prefers itself, and leaves unquestion'd
Matters of needful value. We shall write to you,
As time and our concernings shall impórtune,
How it goes with us; and do look to know
What doth befall you here. So, fare you well:
To the hopeful execution do I leave you
Of your commissions.

Ang. Yet, give leave, my lord,
That we may bring you something on the way.

Duke. My haste may not admit it;
Nor need you, on mine honour, have to do
With any scruple: your scope[13] is as mine own,
So to enforce or qualify the laws,
As to your soul seems good. Give me your hand.
I'll privily away: I love the people,
But do not like to stage me to their eyes:
Though it do well, I do not relish well
Their loud applause, and *aves*[14] vehement;
Nor do I think the man of safe discretion
That does affect it. Once more, fare you well.

Ang. The heavens give safety to your purposes!

Escal. Lead forth, and bring you back in happiness!

Duke. I thank you: Fare you well. [*Exit.*

Escal. I shall desire you, sir, to give me leave
To have free speech with you; and it concerns me
To look into the bottom of my place:
A power I have; but of what strength and nature
I am not yet instructed.

Ang. 'Tis so with me:—Let us withdraw together
And we may soon our satisfaction have
Touching that point.

Escal. I'll wait upon your honour.
[*Exeunt.*

[13] *Scope* is extent of power.

[14] *Aves* are hallings.

SCENE II. A Street.

Enter LUCIO *and two Gentlemen.*

Lucio. If the Duke, with the other dukes, come not to composition with the king of Hungary, why, then all the dukes fall upon the king.

1 *Gent.* Heaven grant us its peace, but not the king of Hungary's!

2 *Gent.* Amen.

Lucio. Thou conclud'st like the sanctimonious pirate, that went to sea with the Ten Commandments, but scrap'd one out of the table.

2 *Gent.* Thou shalt not steal?

Lucio. Ay, that he raz'd.

1 *Gent.* Why, 'twas a commandment to command the captain and all the rest from their functions: they put forth to steal. There's not a soldier of us all, that, in the thanksgiving before meat, doth relish the petition well that prays for peace.

2 *Gent.* I never heard any soldier dislike it.

Lucio. I believe thee; for I think thou never wast where grace was said.

2 *Gent.* No? a dozen times at least.

1 *Gent.* What! in metre?

Lucio. In any proportion,[1] or in any language.

1 *Gent.* I think, or in any religion.

Lucio. Ay; why not? Grace is grace, despite of all controversy: as, for example, thou thyself art a wicked villain, despite of all grace.

1 *Gent.* Well, there went but a pair of shears between us.[2]

[1] That is, measure.

[2] An old proverb, meaning,—We were both *cut off*, or out of, the same piece

Lucio. I grant; as there may between the lists and the velvet: Thou art the list.

1 *Gent.* And thou the velvet: thou art good velvet; thou art a three-pil'd piece, I warrant thee: I had as lief be a list of an English kersey, as be pil'd, as thou art pil'd, for a French velvet.[3] Do I speak feelingly now?

Lucio. I think thou dost; and, indeed, with most painful feeling of thy speech: I will, out of thine own confession, learn to begin thy health; but, whilst I live, forget to drink after thee.

1 *Gent.* I think I have done myself wrong, have I not?

2 *Gent.* Yes, that thou hast, whether thou art tainted or free.

Lucio. Behold, behold, where madam Mitigation comes! I have purchas'd as many diseases under her roof as come to —

2 *Gent.* To what, I pray?

Lucio. Judge.

2 *Gent.* To three thousand dollars a-year[4]

1 *Gent.* Ay, and more.

Lucio. A French crown more.

1 *Gent.* Thou art always figuring diseases in me. but thou art full of error; I am sound.

Lucio. Nay, not as one would say, healthy; but so sound as things that are hollow: thy bones are hollow; impiety has made a feast of thee.

[3] A quibble upon *piled* and *pilled.* Velvet was esteemed according to the richness of the *pile;* three-pil'd was the richest. But *Pil'd* also means *bald.* The jest alludes to the loss of hair in the French disease. Lucio, finding the Gentleman understands the distemper so well, and mentions it so *feelingly,* promises to remember to drink his *health,* but to forget *to drink after him.* In old times the cup of an infected person was thought to be contagious.

[4] A quibble upon *dollar* and *dolour.* It occurs again in The Tempest. Act ii. sc. 1 S.

Enter Bawd.

1 *Gent.* How now? Which of your hips has the most profound sciatica?

Bawd. Well, well; there's one yonder arrested, and carried to prison, was worth five thousand of you all.

1 *Gent.* Who's that, I pray thee?

Bawd. Marry, sir, that's Claudio; signior Claudio.

1 *Gent.* Claudio to prison! 'tis not so.

Bawd. Nay, but I know 'tis so: I saw him arrested; saw him carried away; and, which is more, within these three days his head's to be chopp'd off.

Lucio. But, after all this fooling, I would not have it so: Art thou sure of this?

Bawd. I am too sure of it; and it is for getting madam Julietta with child.

Lucio. Believe me, this may be: he promis'd to meet me two hours since; and he was ever precise in promise-keeping.

2 *Gent.* Besides, you know, it draws something near to the speech we had to such a purpose.

1 *Gent.* But, most of all, agreeing with the proclamation.

Lucio. Away: let's go learn the truth of it.

[*Exeunt* Lucio *and Gentlemen.*

Bawd. Thus, what with the war, what with the sweat,[5] what with the gallows, and what with poverty, I am custom-shrunk. How now? what's the news with you?

[5] The *sweat*; the consequences of the curative process then used for a certain disease.

Enter Clown.

Clo. Yonder man is carried to prison.

Bawd. Well: what has he done?

Clo. A woman.

Bawd. But what's his offence?

Clo. Groping for trouts in a peculiar river.

Bawd. What! is there a maid with child by him?

Clo. No; but there's a woman with maid by him: You have not heard of the proclamation, have you?

Bawd. What proclamation, man?

Clo. All houses in the suburbs of Vienna must be pluck'd down.

Bawd. And what shall become of those in the city?

Clo. They shall stand for seed: they had gone down too, but that a wise burgher put in for them.

Bawd. But shall all our houses of resort in the suburbs be pull'd down?[6]

Clo. To the ground, mistress.

Bawd. Why, here's a change, indeed, in the commonwealth! What shall become of me?

Clo. Come, fear not you; good counsellors lack no clients: though you change your place, you need not change your trade; I'll be your tapster still. Courage! there will be pity taken on you: you that have worn your eyes almost out in the service, you will be considered.

Bawd. What's to do here, Thomas Tapster? Let's withdraw.

[6] In one of the Scotch Laws of James it is ordered, "that *common women* be put at the utmost endes of townes, queire least peril of fire is." — It is remarkable that the licensed *houses of resort* at Vienna are at this time all in the suburbs, under the permission of the Committee of Chastity.

Clo. Here comes signior Claudio, led by the provost to prison; and there's madam Juliet. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. The Same.

Enter Provost,[1] CLAUDIO, JULIET, *and Officers*, LUCIO, *and two Gentlemen.*

Claud. Fellow, why dost thou show me thus to the world?
Bear me to prison where I am committed.

Prov. I do it not in evil disposition,
But from lord Angelo by special charge.

Claud. Thus can the demi-god, Authority,
Make us pay down for our offence by weight. –
The words of Heaven; — on whom it will, it will;
On whom it will not, so; yet still 'tis just.[2]

Lucio. Why, how now, Claudio? whence comes this restraint?

Claud. From too much liberty, my Lucio, liberty:
As surfeit is the father of much fast,
So every scope by the immoderate use
Turns to restraint: Our natures do pursue,
Like rats that ravin[3] down their proper bane,
A thirsty evil; and when we drink, we die.[4]

[1] *Provost* was anciently used for *principal* or *president* of any establishment. Here it means jailer. H.

[2] Authority, being absolute in Angelo, is finely styled by Claudio *the demigod*, whose decrees are as little to be questioned as *the words of Heaven*. The poet alludes to a passage in St. Paul's Epist. to the Romans, ch. ix. v. 15–18: "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy."

[3] To *ravin* is to devour voraciously. *Ravenous* is still in use from the same original. H

[4] So, in Chapman's Revenge for Honour:

> "Like poison'd rats, which, when they 've swallowed
> The pleasing bane, rest not until they *drink*,
> And can rest then much less, until they burst"

Lucio. If I could speak so wisely under an arrest, I would send for certain of my creditors: And yet, to say the truth, I had as lief have the foppery of freedom, as the morality of imprisonment. — What's thy offence, Claudio?

Claud. What but to speak of would offend again.

Lucio. What is it? murder?

Claud. No.

Lucio. Lechery?

Claud. Call it so.

Prov. Away, sir: you must go.

Claud. One word, good friend: — Lucio, a word with you. [*Takes him aside.*

Lucio. A hundred, if they'll do you any good. — Is lechery so look'd after?

Claud. Thus stands it with me: — Upon a true contract,
I got possession of Julietta's bed:
You know the lady; she is fast my wife,
Save that we do the denunciation[5] lack
Of outward order: this we came not to,
Only for propagation[6] of a dower

[5] To *denounce* was sometimes used in the sense of to publish, proclaim, or *announce*, a thing. Thus in Holinshed and others we have the phrase, "*denouncing* of war." So, also, in Raleigh's History of the World: "But Gracchus's soldiers, which were all, in a manner, the late armed slaves, had received from their general a peremptory *denunciation*, that, this day, or never, they must purchase their liberty, bringing every man, for price thereof, an enemy's head." H.

[6] A very singular and obscure use of *propagation*. The word, however, is derived from the Greek παγω, πηγνυμι, to *fix*; and Richardson says, that "in the methods of *propagating* trees described by Pliny, one is, when the twigs or branches are *fixed* in the earth: these branches, when rooted, are severed from the parent stock, and thus the tree *multiplied*." So that the sense of *propagation* in the text may be the *fixing* or *securing* of a dower. Or the word may be used in the more common sense of to *continue*, to *prolong*, or *extend the duration of*; as in Chapman's

Remaining in the coffer of her friends;
From whom we thought it meet to hide our love,
Till time had made them for us. But it chances,
The stealth of our most mutual entertainment
With character too gross is writ on Juliet.

Lucio. With child, perhaps?

Claud. Unhappily, even so.
And the new deputy now for the Duke, —
Whether it be the fault and glimpse of newness;
Or whether that the body public be
A horse whereon the governor doth ride,
Who, newly in the seat, that it may know
He can command, lets it straight feel the spur;
Whether the tyranny be in his place,
Or in his eminence that fills it up,
I stagger in: — But this new governor
Awakes me all the enrolled penalties,
Which have, like unscour'd armour, hung by the wall
So long, that nineteen zodiacs[7] have gone round,
And none of them been worn; and, for a name,
Now puts the drowsy and neglected act
Freshly on me: — 'tis surely for a name.

Lucio. I warrant, it is: and thy head stands so tickle[8] on thy shoulders, that a milk-maid, if she be in love, may sigh it off. Send after the Duke, and appeal to him.

Odyssey: "To try if we alone may *propagate* to victory our bold encounters." So also in Dryden's Virgil:

> "Afric and India shall his power obey;
> He shall extend his *propagated* sway
> Beyond the solar year, without the starry way."

In this case the meaning would be, that the lovers put off their marriage with a view to *continue* the prospect, to *keep up* the chance, of a dower, until time should favourably dispose the wills of those upon whom the lady's fortune was dependent. H

[7] *Zodiacs*, yearly circles.

[8] *Tickle*, for ticklish.

Claud. I have done so, but he's not to be found.
I pr'ythee, Lucio, do me this kind service:
This day my sister should the cloister enter,
And there receive her approbation:[9]
Acquaint her with the danger of my state;
Implore her, in my voice, that she make friends
To the strict deputy; bid herself assay him:
I have great hope in that; for in her youth
There is a prone[10] and speechless dialect,
Such as moves men: besides, she hath prosperous art
When she will play with reason and discourse,
And well she can persuade.

Lucio. I pray, she may: as well for the encouragement of the like, which else would stand under grievous imposition; as for the enjoying of thy life, who I would be sorry should be thus foolishly lost at a game of tick-tack.[11] I'll to her.

Claud. I thank you, good friend Lucio.

Lucio. Within two hours.

Claud. Come, officer; away. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. A Monastery.

Enter DUKE *and Friar* THOMAS.

Duke. No, holy father; throw away that thought:

[9] That is, enter on her *novitiate* or *probation*.

[10] *Prone* seems to be here used in the sense of *apt*. Cotgrave says,—"Prone, ready, nimble, quick, easily moving." And elsewhere we meet with the phrases, "so *prone* and fit," and "*prone* or apt." So that the meaning appears to be, "There is an apt and silent eloquence in her looks, such as moves men." H.

[11] *Tick-tack*, from the French *tric-trac*, and sometimes spelt trick-track in English, was a game played with tables, something like *backgammon*. Of course the word is here used in a wanton sense. H.

Believe not that the dribbling[1] dart of love
Can pierce a cómplete bosom: Why I desire thee
To give me secret harbour, hath a purpose
More grave and wrinkled than the aims and ends
Of burning youth.

Fri. May your grace speak of it?

Duke. My holy sir, none better knows than you
How I have ever lov'd the life remov'd;
And held in idle price to haunt assemblies,
Where youth, and cost, and witless bravery keeps.
I have deliver'd to lord Angelo
(A man of stricture and firm abstinence)
My absolute power and place here in Vienna,
And he supposes me travell'd to Poland;
For so I have strew'd it in the common ear,
And so it is receiv'd: Now, pious sir,
You will demand of me, why I do this?

Fri. Gladly, my lord.

[1] "*Dribble*," says Richardson, "is a diminutive of *drib*," from *drip*, and means to do any thing by drips or drops. The sense of *dribbling*, therefore, is *trifling*, *ineffective*. Thus in Holland's Livy: "Howbeit, there passed some *dribbling* skirmishes between the rearward of the Carthaginians and the vaunt-couriers of the Romans." So also in Milton's Apology for Smectymnus: "For small temptations allure but *dribbling* offenders!" And in Brome's Songs:

"And out of all 's ill-gotten store
He gives a *dribbling* to the poor."

Respecting the use of the term in archery, which Steevens thought could not be satisfactorily explained, Ascham says of one who, having learned to shoot well, neglects to practise with the bow, — "He shall become, of a fayre archer, a starke squyrter and *dribber*." — In the next line, "a complete bosom" is a bosom completely armed. H.

[2] That is, dwells. So, in 1 Henry IV. Act i. sc. 3, Hotspur says, — "'Twas where the madcap duke, his uncle, *kept*." This use of the word, though now rare in England, is so common in America as to be called an Americanism. — *Bravery* is fine showy dress. H.

Duke. We have strict statutes and most biting laws,
(The needful bits and curbs to headstrong steeds,[3]
Which for these fourteen years we have let sleep;
Even like an o'ergrown lion in a cave,
That goes not out to prey: Now, as fond fathers,
Having bound up the threatening twigs of birch,
Only to stick it in their children's sight,
For terror, not to use; in time the rod
Becomes[4] more mock'd than fear'd: so our decrees,
Dead to infliction, to themselves are dead,
And liberty plucks justice by the nose;
The baby beats the nurse, and quite athwart
Goes all decorum.

Fri. It rested in your grace
To unloose this tied-up justice, when you pleas'd;
And it in you more dreadful would have seem'd,
Than in lord Angelo.

Duke. I do fear, too dreadful:
Sith 'twas my fault to give the people scope,
'Twould be my tyranny to strike, and gall them
For what I bid them do: for we bid this be done,
When evil deeds have their permissive pass,
And not the punishment. Therefore, indeed, my father,
I have on Angelo impos'd the office;

[3] The original here has *weeds*, which Mr. Collier retains, saying that "weed is a term still commonly applied to an ill-conditioned horse." But this wants confirmation; otherwise the change were hardly to be allowed. — In the next line, instead of *let sleep*, the original has *let slip*, which Knight retains, notwithstanding its jarring with the context. While *sleep* seems required by the course of the metaphor, it is no less justified by what is said in another place: "The law hath not been dead, though it hath *slept*." H.

[4] This word, not in the original, but required alike by the sense and by the verse, was suggested by Davenant, and inserted by Pope, and has since been universally received H.

Who may, in the ambush of my name, strike home,
And yet my nature never in the fight,
To do in slander: [5] And to behold his sway,
I will, as 'twere a brother of your order,
Visit both prince and people: therefore, I pr'ythee,
Supply me with the habit, and instruct me
How I may formally in person bear me
Like a true friar. More reasons for this action
At our more leisure shall I render you;
Only, this one: — Lord Angelo is precise;
Stands at a guard [6] with envy; scarce confesses
That his blood flows, or that his appetite
Is more to bread than stone: Hence shall we see,
If power change purpose, what our seemers be.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. A Nunnery.

Enter ISABELLA *and* FRANCISCA.

Isab. And have you nuns no further privileges?

Fran. Are not these large enough?

Isab. Yes, truly: I speak not as desiring more;
But rather wishing a more strict restraint
Upon the sisterhood, the votarists of Saint Clare.

Lucio. [*Within.*] Ho! Peace be in this place!

Isab. Who's that which calls?

Fran. It is a man's voice: Gentle Isabella,

[5] This is the reading of the original. The passage is usually printed thus:

"And yet my nature never in the *sight*
To do *it* slander."

The words *ambush* and *strike home* show the image of a *fight* to have been in the Poet's mind. As the text stands, the speaker's purpose apparently is to avoid any open contest with crime, where his action would expose him to slander; not to let his person be seen in the fight, where he would have to work, *to do*, in the face of detraction and censure. H.

[6] That is, stands on his defence against envy. H.

Turn you the key, and know his business of him;
You may, I may not; you are yet unsworn:
When you have vow'd, you must not speak with men
But in the presence of the prioress:
Then, if you speak, you must not show your face;
Or, if you show your face, you must not speak.
He calls again: I pray you, answer him.

[*Exit* FRANCISCA.

Isab. Peace and prosperity! Who is't that calls?

Enter LUCIO.

Lucio. Hail, virgin, if you be; as those cheek-roses
Proclaim you are no less! can you so stead me,
As bring me to the sight of Isabella,
A novice of this place, and the fair sister
To her unhappy brother Claudio?

Isab. Why her unhappy brother? let me ask;
The rather, for I now must make you know
I am that Isabella, and his sister.

Lucio. Gentle and fair, your brother kindly greets you:
Not to be weary with you, he's in prison.

Isab. Woe me! For what?

Lucio. For that, which, if myself might be his judge,
He should receive his punishment in thanks:
He hath got his friend with child.

Isab. Sir, make me not your story.[1]

Lucio. 'Tis true. I would not — though 'tis my familiar sin

[1] Such is the reading of the original; the *me* being expletive, as in the well-known passage setting forth the virtues of sack "It ascends *me* into the brain," &c. So that the meaning is, — "Make not your tale, invent not your fiction." Malone *improved* the passage thus: "Sir, mock me not, — your story;" which surely, renders Lucio's reply, *'tis true*, very unapt. H.

With maids to seem the lapwing,[2] and to jest,
Tongue far from heart — play with all virgins so:
I hold you as a thing enskied and sainted
By your renouncement; an immortal spirit,
And to be talk'd with in sincerity,
As with a saint.

Isab. You do blaspheme the good, in mocking me

Lucio. Do not believe it. Fewness and truth, 'tis thus:
Your brother and his lover have embrac'd:
As those that feed grow full; as blossoming time,
That from the seedness the bare fallow brings
To teeming foison;[4] even so her plenteous womb
Expresseth his full tilth[5] and husbandry.

Isab. Some one with child by him? — My cousin Juliet?

Lucio. Is she your cousin?

Isab. Adoptedly; as school-maids change their names,
By vain though apt affection.

Lucio. She it is.

Isab. O, let him marry her!

Lucio. This is the point.

[2] This bird is said to divert pursuers from her nest by crying in other places. "The lapwing cries most, farthest from her nest," is an old proverb. Thus in The Comedy of Errors:

"Far from her nest the lapwing cries away;
My heart prays for him, though my tongue doth curse;"

which shows what is meant by "tongue far from heart." So, again, in Lyly's Alexander and Campaspe: "You resemble the lapwing, who crieth most where her nest is not, and so, to lead me from espying your love for Campaspe, you cry Timoclea." H.

[3] That is, in few and true words.

[4] *Teeming foison* is abundant produce.

[5] *Tilth* is tillage. So in Shakespeare's third Sonnet:

"For who is she so fair, whose unrear'd *womb*
Disdains the *tillage* of thy husbandry?"

The Duke is very strangely gone from hence;
Bore many gentlemen, myself being one,
In hand,[6] and hope of action: but we do learn
By those that know the very nerves of state,
His givings-out were of an infinite distance
From his true-meant design. Upon his place,
And with full line of his authority,
Governs lord Angelo; a man whose blood
Is very snow-broth; one who never feels
The wanton stings and motions of the sense;
But doth rebate[7] and blunt his natural edge
With profits of the mind, study and fast.
He — to give fear to use and liberty,[8]
Which have, for long, run by the hideous law,
As mice by lions — hath pick'd out an act,
Under whose heavy sense your brother's life
Falls into forfeit: he arrests him on it;
And follows close the rigour of the statute,
To make him an example: all hope is gone,
Unless you have the grace by your fair prayer
To soften Angelo: And that's my pith
Of business 'twixt you and your poor brother.

Isab. Doth he so seek his life?

Lucio. Has censur'd[9] him

[6] "To bear in hand," says Richardson, "is merely to carry along with us, to lead along, as suitors, dependants, expectants, believers." The phrase is not uncommon in old writers. Thus, in 2 Henry IV. Act i. sc. 2: "A rascally yea-forsooth knave *to bear a gentleman in hand*, and then stand upon security!" H.

[7] To *rebate* is to beat back; hence, applied to any thing sharp, it is to make dull. H.

[8] That is, to put the restraint of fear upon licentious custom and abused freedom. H.

[9] To *censure* is to *judge*, to pass sentence. We have it again in the next scene:

> "When I that *censure* him do so offend,
> Let mine own judgment pattern out my death."

Already; and, as I hear, the provost hath
A warrant for his execution.

Isab. Alas! what poor ability's in me
To do him good?

Lucio. Assay the power you have.

Isab. My power? alas! I doubt.

Lucio. Our doubts are traitors,
And make us lose the good we oft might win,
By fearing to attempt: Go to lord Angelo,
And let him learn to know, when maidens sue,
Men give like gods; but when they weep and kneel,
All their petitions are as freely theirs
As they themselves would owe[10] them.

Isab. I'll see what I can do.

Lucio. But speedily

Isab. I will about it straight;
No longer staying but to give the mother[11]
Notice of my affair. I humbly thank you:
Commend me to my brother: soon at night
I'll send him certain word of my success.

Lucio. I take my leave of you.

Isab. Good sir, adieu.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. A Hall in Angelo's House.

Enter Angelo, Escalus, *a Justice, Provost, Officers, and other Attendants.*

Ang. We must not make a scare-crow of the law,
Setting it up to fear[1] the birds of prey,

[10] To *owe* is to *have*, to *possess*.

[11] That is, the *abbess*

[1] To *fear* is to affright.

And let it keep one shape, till custom make it
Their perch, and not their terror.

Escal. Ay, but yet
Let us be keen, and rather cut a little,
Than fall,[2] and bruise to death: Alas! this gentleman,
Whom I would save, had a most noble father.
Let but your honour know,
(Whom I believe to be most strait in virtue,)
That, in the working of your own affections,
Had time coher'd with place, or place with wishing,
Or that the resolute acting of your blood
Could have attain'd the effect of your own purpose,
Whether you had not sometime in your life
Err'd in this point where now you censure him,[3]
And pull'd the law upon you.

Ang. 'Tis one thing to be tempted, Escalus,
Another thing to fall. I not deny,
The jury, passing on the prisoner's life,
May, in the sworn twelve, have a thief or two
Guiltier than him they try: What's open made
To justice, that justice seizes. What know the laws,
That thieves do pass[4] on thieves? 'Tis very pregnant,[5]
The jewel that we find, we stoop and take it,
Because we see it; but what we do not see,
We tread upon, and never think of it.
You may not so extenuate his offence,
For[6] I have had such faults; but rather tell me,

[2] That is, throw down; *to fall* a tree is still used for *to fell* it.

[3] To complete the sense of this line *for* seems to be required, — "which now you censure him *for*." But Shakespeare frequently uses elliptical expressions.

[4] An old forensic term, signifying *to pass judgment*, or *sentence*.

[5] *Full of force or conviction*, or *full of proof in itself*. So, in Othello, Act ii. sc. 1: "As it is a most *pregnant* and unfore'd position."

[6] That is, because.

When I, that censure him, do so offend,
Let mine own judgment pattern out my death,
And nothing come in partial. Sir, he must die.

Escal. Be it as your wisdom will.

Ang. Where is the provost?

Prov. Here, if it like your honour.

Ang. See that Claudio
Be executed by nine to-morrow morning:
Bring him his confessor, let him be prepar'd;
For that's the utmost of his pilgrimage.
[*Exit Provost.*

Escal. Well, Heaven forgive him; and forgive us all!
Some rise by sin, and some by virtue fall:
Some run from brakes of vice,[7] and answer none;
And some condemned for a fault alone.

[7] The original here reads, — "Some run from brakes of ice;" which Mr. Collier retains, silently changing *brakes* into *breaks*. It can hardly be denied that this reading yields very good sense; the image of course being that of men making good their escape, even when the ice is breaking under them. But *brakes* and *ice* do not quite cohere; and it seems as proper to change *ice* into *vice*, as *brakes* into *breaks*; and, as the former accords better with the rest of the passage, we venture to accept it. It was first made by Rowe. But there is a further question, whether *brake*, allowing that to be the right word, here means an engine of war or torture, or a snare, or a bramble; the word being used in all these senses. For the first, thus in Holland's Pliny: "Among engines of artillery, the Cretes invented the scorpion or crossebow; the Syrians, the catapult; the Phenicians, the balist or *brake*, and the sling;" and in Palsgrave: "I brake on a *brake* or payne bauke, as men do mysdoers to confesse the trouthe." For the second, it occurs in Skelton's Ellinour Rummin: "It was a stale to take — the devil in a *brake*;" and in another old play: "Her I'll make a stale to catch this courtier in a *brake*." For the third, it is found in Henry VIII. Act i. sc. 2: "'Tis but the fate of place, and the rough *brake* that virtue must go through;" and Ben Jonson has, — "Look at the false and cunning man, crush'd in the snaky *brakes* that he had past." Which of these senses the word bears in the text, we must leave the reader to decide for himself. Mr Dyce thinks that *brakes* is here used for instruments or engines of

Enter ELBOW, FROTH, *Clown*, *Officers*, *&c.*

Elb. Come, bring them away: If these be good people in a commonweal, that do nothing but use their abuses in common houses, I know no law: bring them away.

Ang. How now, sir! What's your name? and what's the matter?

Elb. If it please your honour, I am the poor Duke's constable, and my name is Elbow: I do lean upon justice, sir, and do bring in here before your good honour two notorious benefactors.

Ang. Benefactors! Well; what benefactors are they? are they not malefactors?

Elb. If it please your honour, I know not well what they are: but precise villains they are, that I am sure of; and void of all profanation in the world, that good Christians ought to have.

Escal. This comes off well:[8] here's a wise officer!

Ang. Go to: What quality are they of? Elbow is your name? Why dost thou not speak, Elbow?

Clo. He cannot, sir: he's out at elbow.

Ang. What are you, sir?

Elb. He, sir? a tapster, sir; parcel-bawd; one that serves a bad woman, whose house, sir, was, as they say, pluck'd down in the suburbs; and now she professes a hot-house,[9] which, I think, is a very ill house too.

punishment, from which some men escape, and answer no questions. But the more common notion is, that in this place the word means brambles, thickets, or thorny entanglements of vice, which some rush into, and, when pursued, run away from uncaught while others have to suffer for a single act of vice. H.

[8] That is, this *is well told*. The meaning of the phrase, when seriously applied to speech, is, "This is well delivered, this story is well told." But in the present instance it is used ironically.

[9] That is, professes, or pretends, *to keep* a hot-house. *Hot*

Escal. How know you that ?

Elb. My wife, sir, whom I detest [10] before heaven and your honour, —

Escal. How ! thy wife ?

Elb. Ay, sir ; whom, I thank Heaven, is an honest woman, —

Escal. Dost thou detest her therefore ?

Elb. I say, sir, I will detest myself also, as well as she, that this house, if it be not a bawd's house, it is pity of her life, for it is a naughty house.

Escal. How dost thou know that, constable ?

Elb. Marry, sir, by my wife ; who, if she had been a woman cardinally given, might have been accus'd in fornication, adultery, and all uncleanliness there.

Escal. By the woman's means ?

Elb. Ay, sir, by mistress Over-done's means : but as she spit in his face, so she defied him.

Clo. Sir, if it please your honour, this is not so.

Elb. Prove it before these varlets here, thou honourable man ; prove it.

Escal. [*To* ANG.] Do you hear how he misplaces ?

Clo. Sir, she came in great with child ; and longing (saving your honour's reverence) for stew'd prunes : sir, we had but two in the house, which at that very distant [11] time stood, as it were, in a fruit-dish, a dish of some three-pence : your honours have seen such dishes ; they are not China dishes, but very good dishes.

houses were bagnios supplied with vapour-baths ; but under this name other accommodations were often furnished. — *Parcel-bawd*, a few lines before, probably means *partly bawd*, alluding to his uniting the two offices of pimp and tapster. So, in 2 Henry IV. Act i. sc. 2, we have "*parcel-gilt* goblet," for partly gilt. H.

[10] *Detest* is an Elbowism for *protest*. H.

[11] The Clown, catching the constable's trick of speech, here uses *distant* as an Elbowism for *instant*. H.

Escal. Go to, go to: no matter for the dish, sir.

Clo. No, indeed, sir, not of a pin; you are therein in the right: but, to the point: As I say, this mistress Elbow, being, as I say, with child, and being great-bellied, and longing, as I said, for prunes; and having but two in the dish, as I said, master Froth here, this very man, having eaten the rest, as I said, and, as I say, paying for them very honestly; — for, as you know, master Froth, I could not give you three-pence again.

Froth. No, indeed.

Clo. Very well: you being then, if you be remember'd, cracking the stones of the foresaid prunes.

Froth. Ay, so I did, indeed.

Clo. Why, very well: I telling you then, if you be remember'd, that such a one, and such a one, were past cure of the thing you wot of, unless they kept very good diet, as I told you.

Froth. All this is true.

Clo. Why, very well then.

Escal. Come, you are a tedious fool: to the purpose: — What was done to Elbow's wife, that he hath cause to complain of? Come we to what was done to her.

Clo. Sir, your honour cannot come to that yet.

Escal. No, sir, nor I mean it not.

Clo. Sir, but you shall come to it, by your honour's leave: And, I beseech you, look into master Froth here, sir; a man of fourscore pound a year; whose father died at Hallowmas: — Was't not at Hallowmas, master Froth?

Froth. All-hollownd eve.[12]

Clo. Why, very well: I hope here be truths

[12] *All-Hollownd Eve,* the Eve of All Saints' day

He, sir, sitting, as I say, in a lower[13] chair, sir; — 'twas in the Bunch of Grapes,[14] where, indeed, you have a delight to sit, have you not?

Froth. I have so; because it is an open room, and good for winter.

Clo. Why, very well then: — I hope here be truths.

Ang. This will last out a night in Russia,
When nights are longest there: I'll take my leave,
And leave you to the hearing of the cause;
Hoping you'll find good cause to whip them all.

Escal. I think no less: Good morrow to your lordship. [*Exit* ANGELO.
Now, sir, come on: What was done to Elbow's wife, once more?

Clo. Once, sir? there was nothing done to her once.

Elb. I beseech you, sir, ask him what this man did to my wife.

Clo. I beseech your honour, ask me.

Escal. Well, sir: What did this gentleman to her?

Clo. I beseech you, sir, look in this gentleman's face: — Good master Froth, look upon his honour, 'tis for a good purpose: Doth your honour mark his face?

Escal. Ay, sir, very well.

Clo. Nay, I beseech you, mark it well.

Escal. Well, I do so.

Clo. Doth your honour see any harm in his face?

Escal. Why, no.

Clo. I'll be suppos'd upon a book, his face is the worst thing about him: Good then; if his face be

[13] Every house had formerly what was called a *low chair*, designed for the ease of sick people, and occasionally occupied by lazy ones.

[14] Such names were often given to rooms in the Poet's time. Thus in the Will of Henry Harte, we read of a "chamber called the Half-moon." H

the worst thing about him, how could master Froth do the constable's wife any harm? I would know that of your honour?

Escal. He's in the right: Constable, what say you to it?

Elb. First, an it like you, the house is a respected house: next, this is a respected fellow; and his mistress is a respected woman.

Clo. By this hand, sir, his wife is a more respected person than any of us all.

Elb. Varlet, thou liest; thou liest, wicked varlet: the time is yet to come, that she was ever respected with man, woman, or child.

Clo. Sir, she was respected with him before he married with her.

Escal. Which is the wiser here, Justice, or Iniquity? [15] Is this true?

Elb. O thou caitiff! O thou varlet! O thou wicked Hannibal! I respected with her, before I was married to her? If ever I was respected with her, or she with me, let not your worship think me the poor Duke's officer: — Prove this, thou wicked Hannibal, or I'll have mine action of battery on thee.

Escal. If he took you a box o' the ear, you might have your action of slander too.

Elb. Marry, I thank your good worship for it: What is't your worship's pleasure I shall do with this wicked caitiff?

Escal. Truly, officer, because he has some offences in him, that thou wouldst discover if thou couldst, let him continue in his courses till thou know'st what they are.

Elb. Marry, I thank your worship for it: — Thou seest thou wicked varlet now, what's come upon

[15] That is, the prosecutor or the criminal.

thee: thou art to continue now, thou varlet; thou art to continue.

Escal. Where were you born, friend?

Froth. Here in Vienna, sir.

Escal. Are you of fourscore pounds a year?

Froth. Yes, an't please you, sir.

Escal. So.—What trade are you of, sir?

Clo A tapster; a poor widow's tapster.

Escal. Your mistress's name?

Clo. Mistress Over-done.

Escal. Hath she had any more than one husband?

Clo. Nine, sir; Over-done by the last.

Escal. Nine!—Come hither to me, master Froth. Master Froth, I would not have you acquainted with tapsters; they will draw you, master Froth, and you will hang them: Get you gone, and let me hear no more of you.

Froth. I thank your worship: for mine own part, I never come into any room in a taphouse, but I am drawn in.

Escal. Well; no more of it, master Froth: farewell. [*Exit* FROTH.]—Come you hither to me, master tapster: What's your name, master tapster?

Clo. Pompey.

Escal. What else?

Clo. Bum, sir.

Escal. 'Troth, and your bum is the greatest thing about you:[16] so that, in the beastliest sense, you are Pompey the great. Pompey, you are partly a bawd, Pompey, howsoever you colour it in being a tapster Are you not? come, tell me true: it shall be the better for you.

[16] The breeches were formerly worn very large about the hips and perhaps Pompey went beyond the fashion.

Clo. Truly, sir, I am a poor fellow that would live.

Escal. How would you live, Pompey? by being a bawd? What do you think of the trade, Pompey? is it a lawful trade?

Clo. If the law would allow it, sir.

Escal. But the law will not allow it, Pompey; nor it shall not be allowed in Vienna.

Clo. Does your worship mean to geld and spay all the youth of the city?

Escal. No, Pompey.

Clo. Truly, sir, in my poor opinion, they will to't then: If your worship will take order for the drabs and the knaves, you need not to fear the bawds.

Escal. There are pretty orders beginning, I can tell you: It is but heading and hanging.

Clo. If you head and hang all that offend that way but for ten year together, you'll be glad to give out a commission for more heads. If this law hold in Vienna ten year, I'll rent the fairest house in it after three-pence a day: if you live to see this come to pass, say Pompey told you so.

Escal. Thank you, good Pompey: and, in requital of your prophecy, hark you: — I advise you, let me not find you before me again upon any complaint whatsoever, no, not for dwelling where you do: if I do, Pompey, I shall beat you to your tent, and prove a shrewd Cæsar to you; in plain dealing, Pompey, I shall have you whipt: so for this time, Pompey, fare you well.

[17] *A bay* is a principal division in building, as a *barn of three bays* is a barn twice crossed by beams. Coles in his Latin Dictionary defines "a bay of building, *mensura 24 pedum*." Houses appear to have been estimated by the number of bays

Clo. I thank your worship for your good counsel; but I shall follow it as the flesh and fortune shall better determine.

Whip me? No, no; let carman whip his jade;
The valiant heart's not whipt out of his trade.

[*Exit.*

Escal. Come hither to me, master Elbow; come hither, master constable. How long have you been in this place of constable?

Elb. Seven year and a half, sir.

Escal. I thought, by your readiness in the office, you had continued in it some time: You say, seven years together?

Elb. And a half, sir.

Escal. Alas! it hath been great pains to you. They do you wrong to put you so oft upon't: Are there not men in your ward sufficient to serve it?

Elb. Faith, sir, few of any wit in such matters: As they are chosen, they are glad to choose me for them: I do it for some piece of money, and go through with all.

Escal. Look you bring me in the names of some six or seven, the most sufficient of your parish.

Elb. To your worship's house, sir?

Escal. To my house: Fare you well. [*Exit* Elbow.] What's o'clock, think you?

Just. Eleven, sir.

Escal. I pray you home to dinner with me.

Just. I humbly thank you.

Escal. It grieves me for the death of Claudio; But there's no remedy.

Just. Lord Angelo is severe.

Escal. It is but needful:
Mercy is not itself that oft looks so;
Pardon is still the nurse of second woe:

But yet, — poor Claudio! — There's no remedy.
Come, sir. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. Another Room in the same.

Enter Provost and a Servant.

Serv. He's hearing of a cause: he will come straight.
I'll tell him of you.

Prov. Pray you, do. [*Exit Servant.*] I'll know
His pleasure: may be, he will relent. Alas!
He hath but as offended in a dream:
All sects, all ages smack of this vice; and he
To die for it! —

Enter ANGELO.

Ang. Now, what's the matter, provost?

Prov. Is it your will Claudio shall die to-morrow?

Ang. Did I not tell thee, yea? hadst thou not order?
Why dost thou ask again?

Prov. Lest I might be too rash:
Under your good correction, I have seen,
When, after execution, judgment hath
Repented o'er his doom.

Ang. Go to; let that be mine:
Do you your office, or give up your place,
And you shall well be spar'd.

Prov. I crave your honour's pardon. —
What shall be done, sir, with the groaning Juliet?
She's very near her hour.

Ang. Dispose of her
To some more fitter place; and that with speed.

Re-enter Servant.

Serv. Here is the sister of the man condemn'd,
Desires access to you.

Ang Hath he a sister ?

Prov Ay, my good lord; a very virtuous maid,
And to be shortly of a sisterhood,
If not already.

Ang. Well, let her be admitted. [*Exit Serv.*
See you the fornicatress be remov'd:
Let her have needful but not lavish means;
There shall be order for it.

Enter LUCIO *and* ISABELLA.

Prov. Save your honour. [*Offering to retire.*

Ang. Stay a little while.—[*To* ISAB.] You are welcome: What's your will ?

Isab. I am a woful suitor to your honour,
Please but your honour hear me.

Ang. Well; what's your suit ?

Isab. There is a vice, that most I do abhor,
And most desire should meet the blow of justice;
For which I would not plead, but that I must;
For which I must not plead, but that I am
At war 'twixt will and will not.

Ang. Well; the matter ?

Isab. I have a brother is condemn'd to die:
I do beseech you, let it be his fault,
And not my brother.[1]

Prov. Heaven give thee moving graces!

Ang. Condemn the fault, and not the actor of it!
Why, every fault's condemn'd, ere it be done:
Mine were the very cipher of a function,
To fine[2] the faults, whose fine stands in record,
And let go by the actor.

Isab. O just, but severe law!

[1] That is, let my brother's fault die, but let not him suffer.

[2] That is, "to pronounce the fine or sentence of the law upon the *crime*, and let the *delinquent* escape."

I had a brother then. — Heaven keep your honour! [*Retiring.*

Lucio. [*To* ISAB.] Give't not o'er so: to him again, intreat him;
Kneel down before him, hang upon his gown;
You are too cold: if you should need a pin,
You could not with more tame a tongue desire it:
To him, I say.

Isab. Must he needs die?

Ang. Maiden, no remedy.

Isab. Yes; I do think that you might pardon him,
And neither Heaven, nor man, grieve at the mercy.

Ang. I will not do't.

Isab. But can you, if you would?

Ang. Look, what I will not, that I cannot do.

Isab. But might you do't, and do the world no wrong,
If so your heart were touch'd with that remorse
As mine is to him?

Ang. He's sentenc'd: 'tis too late.

Lucio. [*To* ISAB.] You are too cold.

Isab. Too late? why, no; I, that do speak a word,
May call it back again: — Well, believe [3] this,
No ceremony that to great ones 'longs,
Not the king's crown, nor the deputed sword,
The marshal's truncheon, nor the judge's robe,
Become them with one half so good a grace
As mercy does. If he had been as you
And you as he, you would have slipt like him,
But he, like you, would not have been so stern.

Ang. Pray you, begone.

Isab. I would to Heaven I had your potency,
And you were Isabel! should it then be thus?

[3] That is, be assured of it.

No; I would tell what 'twere to be a judge,
And what a prisoner.

Lucio. [*Aside.*] Ay, touch him: there's the vein

Ang. Your brother is a forfeit of the law,
And you but waste your words.

Isab. Alas! alas!
Why, all the souls that were, were forfeit once;
And He, that might the vantage best have took,
Found out the remedy. How would you be,
If He, which is the top of judgment, should
But judge you as you are? O! think on that,
And mercy then will breathe within your lips,
Like man new made.[4]

Ang. Be you content, fair maid:
It is the law, not I, condemns your brother:
Were he my kinsman, brother, or my son,
It should be thus with him: — he must die to-morrow.

Isab. To-morrow? O, that's sudden! Spare him, spare him!
He's not prepar'd for death. Even for our kitchens
We kill the fowl of season:[5] shall we serve Heaven
With less respect than we do minister
To our gross selves? Good, good my lord, bethink you:
Who is it that hath died for this offence?
There's many have committed it.

Lucio. [*Aside.*] Ay, well said.

Ang. The law hath not been dead, though it hath slept:[6]
Those many had not dar'd to do that evil,

[4] "You will then be as tender-hearted and merciful as the first man was in his days of innocence."

[5] That is, when in season.

[6] "*Dormiunt aliquando leges, moriuntur nunquam,*" is a maxim of our law.

If the first that did the edict infringe
Had answer'd for his deed: now 'tis awake;
Takes note of what is done; and, like a prophet,
Looks in a glass,[7] that shows what future evils
(Either now, or by remissness new-conceiv'd,
And so in progress to be hatch'd and born)
Are now to have no súccessive degrees,
But, ere they live, to end.

Isab. Yet show some pity

Ang. I show it most of all, when I show justice;
For then I pity those I do not know,[8]
Which a dismiss'd offence would after gall;
And do him right, that, answering one foul wrong,
Lives not to act another. Be satisfied:
Your brother dies to-morrow: be content.

Isab. So, you must be the first, that gives this sentence;
And he, that suffers: O! it is excellent
To have a giant's strength; but it is tyrannous
To use it like a giant.

Lucio. [*Aside.*] That's well said.

Isab. Could great men thunder
As Jove himself does, Jove would ne'er be quiet,
For every pelting,[9] petty officer
Would use his heaven for thunder;
Nothing but thunder. Merciful Heaven!
Thou rather, with thy sharp and sulphurous bolt,
Split'st the unwedgeable and gnarled[10] oak,
Than the soft myrtle; but man, proud man!
Dress'd in a little brief authority,

[7] This alludes to the deceptions of the fortune-tellers, who pretended to see future events in a beryl, or crystal glass.

[8] One of Judge Hale's Memorials is of the same tendency "When I find myself swayed to mercy, let me remember that there is a mercy likewise due to the country."

[9] *Pelting* for paltry.

[10] *Gnarled*, knotted.

Most ignorant of what he's most assur'd,
His glassy essence,[11] like an angry ape,
Plays such fantastic tricks before high Heaven,
As make the angels weep; who, with our spleens,
Would all themselves laugh mortal.[12]

Lucio. [*To* ISAB.] O, to him, to him, wench! he will relent:
He's coming, I perceive't.

Prov. [*Aside.*] Pray Heaven, she win him!

Isab. We cannot weigh our brother with yourself:
Great men may jest with saints: 'tis wit in them;
But in the less foul profanation.

Lucio. [*To* ISAB.] Thou'rt in the right, girl: more o' that.

Isab. That in the captain's but a choleric word,
Which in the soldier is flat blasphemy.

Lucio. [*Aside.*] Art advis'd o' that? more on't.

Ang. Why do you put these sayings upon me?

Isab. Because authority, though it err like others,
Hath yet a kind of medicine in itself,
That skins the vice o' the top:[13] Go to your bosom,
Knock there, and ask your heart what it doth know
That's like my brother's fault: if it confess
A natural guiltiness, such as is his,
Let it not sound a thought upon your tongue
Against my brother's life.

Ang. [*Aside.*] She speaks, and 'tis

[11] That is, his brittle, fragile being. H.

[12] The notion of angels weeping for the sins of men is rabbinical. By *spleens* Shakespeare meant that peculiar turn of the human mind, which always inclines it to a spiteful and unseasonable mirth. Had the angels *that*, they would laugh themselves out of their immortality, by indulging a passion unworthy of that prerogative.

[13] Shakespeare has used this indelicate metaphor again in Hamlet: "It will but skin and film the ulcerous place."

Such sense, that my sense breeds with it.[14]

[*To her.*] Fare you well.

Isab. Gentle my lord, turn back.

Ang. I will bethink me: — Come again to-morrow.

Isab. Hark, how I'll bribe you: Good my lord, turn back.

Ang. How! bribe me?

Isab. Ay, with such gifts, that Heaven shall share with you.

Lucio. [*Aside.*] You had marr'd all else.

Isab. Not with fond shekels of the tested gold,
Or stones, whose rates are either rich or poor
As fancy values them: but with true prayers,
That shall be up at heaven, and enter there,
Ere sunrise; prayers from preserved souls,
From fasting maids, whose minds are dedicate
To nothing temporal.

Ang. Well: come to me
To-morrow.

Lucio. [*Aside to* ISAB.] Go to; it is well: away

Isab. Heaven keep your honour safe!

Ang. [*Aside.*] Amen;[15]
For I am that way going to temptation,
Where prayers cross.[16]

Isab. At what hour to-morrow
Shall I attend your lordship?

[14] That is, such sense as breeds a response in his mind. Malone thought that *sense* here meant *sensual desire.*

[15] Isabella prays that his honour may be safe, meaning only to give him his title: his mind is caught by the word *honour*, he feels that it is in danger, and therefore says amen to her benediction.

[16] The petition of the Lord's Prayer, "Lead us not into temptation," is here considered as *crossing* or intercepting the way in which Angelo was going: he was exposing himself to temptation by the appointment for the morrow's meeting.

Ang. At any time 'fore noon.

Isab. Save your honour!

[*Exeunt* LUCIO, ISABELLA, *and Provost.*

Ang. From thee; even from thy virtue!—
What's this? what's this? Is this her fault, or mine?
The tempter, or the tempted, who sins most? Ha!
Not she; nor doth she tempt: but it is I,
That, lying by the violet in the sun,
Do, as the carrion does, not as the flower,
Corrupt with virtuous season. Can it be,
That modesty may more betray our sense
Than woman's lightness? Having waste ground enough,
Shall we desire to raze the sanctuary,
And pitch our evils there?[17] O, fie, fie, fie!
What dost thou, or what art thou, Angelo?
Dost thou desire her foully, for those things
That make her good? O, let her brother live!
Thieves for their robbery have authority,
When judges steal themselves. What! do I love her,
That I desire to hear her speak again,
And feast upon her eyes? What is't I dream on?
O! cunning enemy, that, to catch a saint,
With saints dost bait thy hook! Most dangerous
Is that temptation, that doth goad us on
To sin in loving virtue: Never could the strumpet,
With all her double vigour, art and nature,
Once stir my temper; but this virtuous maid
Subdues me quite.—Ever, till now,
When men were fond, I smil'd, and wonder'd how!

[*Exit.*

[17] No language could more forcibly express the aggravated profligacy of Angelo's passion, which the purity of Isabella but served the more to inflame. The desecration of edifices devoted to religion, by converting them to the most abject purposes of nature, was an eastern method of expressing contempt. See 2 Kings x. 27.

SCENE III. A Room in a Prison.

Enter Duke, habited like a Friar, and Provost.

Duke. Hail to you, provost! so, I think, you are.

Prov. I am the provost: What's your will, good friar?

Duke. Bound by my charity, and my bless'd order,
I come to visit the afflicted spirits
Here in the prison: do me the common right
To let me see them, and to make me know
The nature of their crimes, that I may minister
To them accordingly.

Prov. I would do more than that, if more were needful.

Enter JULIET.

Look, here comes one; a gentlewoman of mine,
Who, falling in the flames of her own youth,
Hath blister'd her report: She is with child;
And he that got it, sentenc'd; a young man
More fit to do another such offence
Than die for this.

Duke. When must he die?

Prov. As I do think, to-morrow.—
[*To* JULIET.] I have provided for you: stay a while,
And you shall be conducted.

Duke. Repent you, fair one, of the sin you carry?

Juliet. I do; and bear the shame most patiently.

Duke. I'll teach you how you shall arraign your conscience,
And try your penitence, if it be sound,
Or hollowly put on.

Juliet. I'll gladly learn.

Duke. Love you the man that wrong'd you?

Juliet. Yes, as I love the woman that wrong'd him

Duke. So then, it seems, your most offenceful act
Was mutually committed ?
Juliet. Mutually.
Duke. Then was your sin of heavier kind than his.
Juliet. I do confess it, and repent it, father.
Duke. 'Tis meet so, daughter : But lest you do repent,
As that the sin hath brought you to this shame, —
Which sorrow is always towards ourselves, not Heaven ;
Showing, we would not serve Heaven as we love it,
But as we stand in fear, —
Juliet. I do repent me, as it is an evil ;
And take the shame with joy.
Duke. There rest.[1]
Your partner, as I hear, must die to-morrow,
And I am going with instruction to him. —
Grace go with you ! *Benedicite.* [*Exit.*
Juliet. Must die to-morrow ! O, injurious law,[2]
That respites me a life, whose very comfort
Is still a dying horror !
Prov. 'Tis pity of him. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. A Room in ANGELO'S House.

Enter ANGELO.

Ang. When I would pray and think, I think and pray
To several subjects : Heaven hath my empty words ;

[1] That is, not spare to offend Heaven.
[2] That is, keep yourself in this frame of mind.
[3] Sir Thomas Hanmer proposed to read *law* instead of *love* ; a reading that coheres well with the Provost's reply.

Whilst my invention,[1] hearing not my tongue,
Anchors on Isabel: Heaven in my mouth,
As if I did but only chew His name;
And in my heart, the strong and swelling evil
Of my conception. The state, whereon I studied,
Is like a good thing, being often read,
Grown sear'd[2] and tedious; yea, my gravity,
Wherein (let no man hear me) I take pride,
Could I, with boot,[3] change for an idle plume,
Which the air beats for vain. O place! O form!
How often dost thou with thy case, thy habit,
Wrench awe from fools, and tie the wiser souls
To thy false seeming![4] Blood, thou art blood!
Let's write good angel on the devil's horn,
'Tis not the devil's crest.[5]

[1] *Invention* for imagination. So, in Henry V.:

"O for a muse of fire, that would ascend
The brightest heaven of *invention*."

[2] Respecting this word, which is usually given as *fear'd*, it is quite remarkable that of the first folio some copies read *feur'd*, and others *sear'd*, as if the correction were made while the edition was going through the press; though which way the change ran is not altogether certain. Such a use of either word is singular enough: but on the whole we prefer *sear'd*, as it agrees very well with the Poet's use of that word in other places. Thus, in The Comedy of Errors, Act iv. sc. 2:

"He is deformed, crooked, old, and *sere*,
Ill-fac'd, worse-bodied, shapeless every where."

And again, in the well-known passage in Macbeth:

"I have liv'd long enough; my way of life
Is fall'n into the *sere*, the yellow leaf."

So, also, in Spenser's Shepherd's Calender, January:

"All so my lustfull leafe is drie and *sere*,
My timely buds with wayling all are wasted." H.

[3] Boot is profit.

Shakespeare judiciously distinguishes the different operations of high place upon different minds. Fools are frighted and wise men allured. Those who cannot judge but by the eye are easily awed by splendour; those who consider men as well as conditions, are easily persuaded to love the appearance of virtue dignified with power.

[5] The crest was often emblematic of something in the wearer

Enter Servant.

How now! who's there?
Serv. One Isabel, a sister,
Desires access to you.
Ang. Teach her the way. [*Exit Serv*
O heavens!
Why does my blood thus muster to my heart,
Making both it unable for itself,
And dispossessing all my other parts
Of necessary fitness?
So play the foolish throngs with one that swoons,
Come all to help him, and so stop the air
By which he should revive: and even so
The general,[6] subject to a well-wish'd king,
Quit their own part, and in obsequious fondness
Crowd to his presence, where their untaught love
Must needs appear offence.

Enter ISABELLA.

How now, fair maid?
Isab. I am come to know your pleasure.
Ang. That you might know it, would much better please me,
Than to demand what 'tis. Your brother cannot live.

such. for example, as his ancestral name. "The devil's horn" is "the devil's crest;" but if we write "good angel" on it, the emblem is overlooked in the "false seeming;" we think it is not the devil's horn, because itself tells us otherwise. H

[6] That is. the *people* or *multitude* subject to a king. So. in Hamlet: "The play pleased not the million; 'twas caviare to the *general*." It is supposed that Shakespeare. in this passage, and in one before, Act i. sc. 2, intended to flatter the unkingly weakness of James I., which made him so impatient of the crowds which flocked to see him, at his first coming, that he restrained them by a proclamation.

Isab. Even so? — Heaven keep your honour! [*Retiring*

Ang. Yet may he live awhile; and it may be,
As long as you, or I: Yet he must die.

Isab. Under your sentence?

Ang. Yea.

Isab. When, I beseech you? that in his reprieve,
Longer, or shorter, he may be so fitted,
That his soul sicken not.

Ang. Ha! Fie, these filthy vices! It were as good
To pardon him, that hath from nature stolen
A man already made,[7] as to remit
Their saucy sweetness, that do coin Heaven's image
In stamps that are forbid: 'tis all as easy
Falsely to take away a life true made,
As to put mettle in restrained means,
To make a false one.[8]

Isab. 'Tis set down so in heaven, but not in earth

Ang. Say you so? then I shall pose you quickly
Which had you rather, that the most just law
Now took your brother's life; or, to redeem him,
Give up your body to such sweet uncleanness,
As she that he hath stain'd?

Isab. Sir, believe this,
I had rather give my body than my soul.[9]

Ang. I talk not of your soul: Our compell'd sins
Stand more for number than accompt.[10]

[7] That is, that hath killed a man.

[8] The thought is simply, that murder is as easy as fornication: and the inference which Angelo would draw is, that it is as improper to pardon the latter as the former.

[9] Isabel appears to use the words "give my body" in a different sense than Angelo. Her meaning appears to be, "I had rather *die* than forfeit my eternal happiness by the prostitution of my person."

[10] That is, actions that we are compelled to, however numerous, are not imputed to us by Heaven as crimes.

Isab. How say you?

Ang. Nay, I'll not warrant that; for I can speak
Against the thing I say. Answer to this:—
I, now the voice of the recorded law,
Pronounce a sentence on your brother's life:
Might there not be a charity in sin,
To save this brother's life?

Isab. Please you to do't,
I'll take it as a peril to my soul:
It is no sin at all, but charity.

Ang. Pleas'd you to do't, at peril of your soul,
Were equal poise of sin and charity.

Isab. That I do beg his life, if it be sin,
Heaven, let me bear it! you granting of my suit,
If that be sin, I'll make it my morn prayer
To have it added to the faults of mine,
And nothing of your answer.

Ang. Nay, but hear me:
Your sense pursues not mine: either you are ignorant,
Or seem so, craftily; and that's not good.

Isab. Let me be ignorant, and in nothing good
But graciously to know I am no better.

Ang. Thus wisdom wishes to appear most bright,
When it doth tax itself: as these black masks [11]
Proclaim an enshield [12] beauty ten times louder
Than beauty could displayed. — But mark me:
To be received plain, I'll speak more gross:
Your brother is to die.

Isab. So

[11] The masks worn by female spectators of the play are here probably meant. At the beginning of Romeo and Juliet, we have a passage of similar import:

> "These happy *masks* that kiss fair ladies' brows,
> Being *black*, put us in mind they hide the fair."

[12] That is, enshielded, covered.

Ang. And his offence is so, as it appears
accountant to the law upon that pain.

Isab. True.

Ang. Admit no other way to save his life,
(As I subscribe not that, nor any other,)
But, in the loss of question,[13] that you, his sister,
Finding yourself desir'd of such a person,
Whose credit with the judge, or own great place,
Could fetch your brother from the manacles
Of the all-binding law; and that there were
No earthly mean to save him, but that either
You must lay down the treasures of your body
To this suppos'd, or else to let him suffer;
What would you do?

Isab. As much for my poor brother, as myself:
That is, were I under the terms of death,
The impression of keen whips I'd wear as rubies
And strip myself to death, as to a bed
That longing I've been sick for, ere I'd yield
My body up to shame.

Ang. Then must your brother die

Isab. And 'twere the cheaper way:
Better it were, a brother died at once,
Than that a sister, by redeeming him,
Should die forever.

Ang. Were not you then as cruel as the sentence
That you have slander'd so?

Isab. Ignomy[14] in ransom, and free pardon,
Are of two houses: lawful mercy is
Nothing akin to foul redemption.

Ang. You seem'd of late to make the law a tyrant
And rather prov'd the sliding of your brother
A merriment than a vice.

[13] That is, conversation that tends to nothing.
[14] *Ignomy*, ignominy.

Isab. O pardon me, my lord! it oft falls out,
To have what we would have, we speak not what we mean:
I something do excuse the thing I hate,
For his advantage that I dearly love.
Ang. We are all frail.
Isab. Else let my brother die;
If not a feodary, but only he,
Owe, and succeed this weakness.[15]
Ang. Nay, women are frail too.
Isab. Ay, as the glasses where they view themselves;
Which are as easy broke as they make forms.
Women!—Help, Heaven! men their creation mar
In profiting by them.[16] Nay, call us ten times frail;
For we are soft as our complexions are,
And credulous to false prints.[17]
Ang. I think it well:
And from this testimony of your own sex,
(Since, I suppose, we are made to be no stronger
Than faults may shake our frames,) let me be bold:—
I do arrest your words: Be that you are,
That is, a woman; if you be more, you're none:
If you be one, (as you are well express'd

[15] A very obscure passage. The original reads, *thy weakness* which fairly defies explanation. The word *this* is adopted by Mr. Collier from an old manuscript note in a copy of the first folio belonging to Lord Francis Egerton. With this change, the passage, though still obscure, makes good sense enough: "If we are not *all frail*,—if my brother have no *feodary*, that is, no companion, one holding by the same tenure of frailty,—if he alone be found to *own and succeed* to this weakness,—then let him die." H.

[16] The meaning appears to be, that men debase their natures by taking advantage of women's weakness. She therefore calls on Heaven to assist them

[17] That is, impressions.

By all external warrants,) show it now,
By putting on the destin'd livery.

Isab. I have no tongue but one: gentle my lord,
Let me entreat you speak the former language.

Ang. Plainly, conceive I love you.

Isab. My brother did love Juliet; and you tell me
That he shall die for it.

Ang. He shall not, Isabel, if you give me love.

Isab. I know your virtue hath a license in't,
Which seems a little fouler than it is,
To pluck on others.[18]

Ang. Believe me, on mine honour,
My words express my purpose.

Isab. Ha! little honour to be much believ'd,
And most pernicious purpose! — Seeming, seeming!—
I will proclaim thee, Angelo; look for't!
Sign me a present pardon for my brother,
Or, with an outstretch'd throat, I'll tell the world aloud
What man thou art.

Ang. Who will believe thee, Isabel?
My unsoil'd name, the austereness of my life,
My vouch against you, and my place i'the state,
Will so your accusation overweigh,
That you shall stifle in your own report,
And smell of calumny. I have begun,
And now I give my sensual race the rein:
Fit thy consent to my sharp appetite;
Lay by all nicety, and prolixious blushes,[19]
That banish what they sue for; redeem thy brother

[18] That is, your virtue assumes an air of *licentiousness*, which is not natural to you, on purpose to try me.

[19] *Prolixious blushes* means what Milton has elegantly called "sweet reluctant amorous *delay*."

By yielding up thy body to my will;
Or else he must not only die the death,
But thy unkindness shall his death draw out
To lingering sufferance. Answer me to-morrow,
Or, by the affection that now guides me most,
I'll prove a tyrant to him: As for you,
Say what you can, my false o'erweighs your true.
[*Exit.*

Isab. To whom should I complain? Did I tell this,
Who would believe me? O perilous mouths!
That bear in them one and the selfsame tongue,
Either of condemnation or approof;
Bidding the law make courtesy to their will;
Hooking both right and wrong to the appetite,
To follow as it draws! I'll to my brother:
Though he hath fallen by prompture of the blood,
Yet hath he in him such a mind of honour,
That had he twenty heads to tender down
On twenty bloody blocks, he'd yield them up,
Before his sister should her body stoop
To such abhorr'd pollution.
Then, Isabel, live chaste, and, brother, die:
More than our brother is our chastity!
I'll tell him yet of Angelo's request,
And fit his mind to death, for his soul's rest. [*Exit*

ACT III.

SCENE I. A Room in the Prison.

Enter DUKE, *as a Friar*, CLAUDIO, *and Provost.*

Duke. So, then, you hope of pardon from lord Angelo?

Claud. The miserable have no other medicine,
But only hope:
I have hope to live, and am prepar'd to die.

Duke. Be absolute for death; either death or life
Shall thereby be the sweeter. Reason thus with life:
If I do lose thee, I do lose a thing
That none but fools would keep:[1] a breath thou art,
Servile to all the skyey influences,
That dost this habitation, where thou keep'st,[2]
Hourly afflict: Merely, thou art death's fool;[3]
For him thou labour'st by thy flight to shun,
And yet runn'st toward him still: Thou art not noble;

[1] *Keep* here means *care for*, a common acceptation of the word in Chaucer and later writers.

[2] That is, dwellest. See Act i. sc. 4, note 2, of this play.

[3] Death and his fool were personages that once figured on the stage. Douce relates having seen a play at a fair, in which Death bore a part, attended by a fool or clown; the person that represented Death being habited in a close black vest so painted as to look like a skeleton. Douce also had an old wood-cut, one of a series representing the Dance of Death, in which the fool was engaged in combat with his adversary, and buffetting him with a bladder filled with peas or small pebbles. In all such performances, the rule appears to have been, that the fool, after struggling long against the stratagems of Death, at last became his victim.

H.

For all the accommodations that thou bear'st
Are nurs'd by baseness:[4] Thou art by no means valiant;
For thou dost fear the soft and tender fork
Of a poor worm:[5] Thy best of rest is sleep,
And that thou oft provok'st; yet grossly fear'st
Thy death, which is no more. Thou art not thyself;
For thou exist'st on many a thousand grains
That issue out of dust: Happy thou art not;
For what thou hast not, still thou striv'st to get;
And what thou hast, forget'st: Thou art not certain;
For thy complexion shifts to strange effects,
After the moon: If thou art rich, thou art poor;
For, like an ass whose back with ingots bows,
Thou bear'st thy heavy riches but a journey,
And death unloads thee: Friend hast thou none;
For thine own bowels, which do call thee sire,
The mere effusion of thy proper loins,
Do curse the gout, serpigo,[6] and the rheum,
For ending thee no sooner: Thou hast nor youth, nor age;
But, as it were, an after-dinner's sleep,
Dreaming on both:[7] for all thy blessed youth

[4] Upon this passage Johnson observes: "A minute analysis of life at once destroys that splendour which dazzles the imagination. Whatever grandeur can display, or luxury enjoy, is procured by *baseness*, by offices of which the mind shrinks from the contemplation. All the delicacies of the table may be traced back to the shambles and the dunghill, all magnificence of building was hewn from the quarry, and all the pomp of ornament from among the damps and darkness of the mine."

[5] *Worm* is put for any creeping thing or *serpent*. Shakespeare adopts the vulgar error, that a serpent wounds with his tongue, and that his tongue is *forked*. In old tapestries and paintings the tongues of serpents and dragons always appear barbed like the point of an arrow.

[6] *Serpigo* is a leprous eruption.

[7] This is exquisitely imagined. When we are young, we busy ourselves in forming schemes for succeeding time, and miss the

Becomes as aged, and doth beg the alms
Of palsied eld;[8] and when thou art old and rich,
Thou hast neither heat, affection, limb, nor beauty,
To make thy riches pleasant. What's yet in this
That bears the name of life? Yet in this life
Lie hid more thousand deaths; yet death we fear,
That makes these odds all even.

Claud. I humbly thank you
To sue to live, I find I seek to die;
And, seeking death, find life: Let it come on.

Isab. [*Without.*] What, ho! Peace here; grace and good company!

Prov. Who's there? come in: the wish deserves a welcome.

Enter ISABELLA.

Duke. Dear sir, ere long I'll visit you again.

Claud. Most holy sir, I thank you.

Isab. My business is a word or two with Claudio.

Prov. And very welcome. Look, signior, here's your sister.

Duke. Provost, a word with you.

Prov. As many as you please.

gratifications that are before us; when we are old, we amuse the languor of age with the recollection of youthful pleasures or performances; so that our life, of which no part is filled with the business of the present time, resembles our dreams after dinner, when the events of the morning are mingled with the designs of the evening.

[8] *Old age.* In youth, which is or ought to be the *happiest* time, man commonly wants means to obtain what he could enjoy; he is dependent on *palsied eld;* must beg alms from the coffers of hoary avarice; and, being very niggardly supplied, *becomes as aged,* looks like an old man on happiness beyond his reach. And when he is *old and rich,* when he has wealth enough for the purchase of all that formerly excited his desires, he has no longer the powers of enjoyment.

Duke. Bring me to hear them speak, where I may be conceal'd.

[*Exeunt* DUKE *and Provost.*

Claud. Now, sister, what's the comfort?

Isab. Why, as all
Comforts are; most good, most good, indeed:
Lord Angelo, having affairs to heaven,
Intends you for his swift ambassador,
Where you shall be an everlasting lieger:[9]
Therefore your best appointment[10] make with speed;
To-morrow you set on.

Claud. Is there no remedy?

Isab. None, but such remedy, as to save a head
To cleave a heart in twain.

Claud. But is there any?

Isab. Yes, brother, you may live:
There is a devilish mercy in the judge,
If you'll implore it, that will free your life,
But fetter you till death.

Claud. Perpetual durance?

Isab. Ay, just; perpetual durance: a restraint,
Though all the world's vastidity[11] you had,
To a determin'd scope.[12]

Claud. But in what nature?

Isab. In such a one as, you consenting to't,
Would bark your honour from that trunk you bear,
And leave you naked.[13]

Claud. Let me know the point.

Isab. O! I do fear thee, Claudio; and I quake,
Lest thou a feverous life shouldst entertain,
And six or seven winters more respect

[9] A *lieger* is a resident. [10] That is, preparation.
[11] That is, vastness of extent.
[12] A confinement of your mind to one idea; to ignominy, of which the remembrance can neither be suppressed nor escaped.
[13] A metaphor, from stripping trees of their *bark*.

Than a perpetual honour. Dar'st thou die?
The sense of death is most in apprehension;
And the poor beetle, that we tread upon,
In corporal sufferance finds a pang as great
As when a giant dies.[14]

Claud. Why give you me this shame?
Think you I can a resolution fetch
From flowery tenderness? If I must die,
I will encounter darkness as a bride,
And hug it in mine arms.

Isab. There spake my brother: there my father's grave
Did utter forth a voice! Yes, thou must die:
Thou art too noble to conserve a life
In base appliances. This outward-sainted deputy –
Whose settled visage and deliberate word
Nips youth i'the head, and follies doth emmew,[15]
As falcon doth the fowl — is yet a devil:
His filth within being cast, he would appear
A pond as deep as hell.

Claud. The precise Angelo?

Isab. O! 'tis the cunning livery of hell,
The damned'st body to invest and cover
In precise guards![16] Dost thou think, Claudio,

[14] This beautiful passage is in all our minds and memories, but it most frequently stands in quotation detached from the antecedent line, — "The sense of death is most in apprehension;" without which it is liable to an opposite construction. The meaning is, that fear is the principal sensation in death, which has no pain, and the giant when he dies feels no greater pain than the beetle.

[15] In whose presence the follies of youth are afraid to show themselves, as the fowl is afraid to flutter while the falcon hovers over it. To *emmew* is a term in falconry, signifying to restrain, to keep in a mew or cage either by force or terror.

[16] The original here reads *prenzie guards*, and, three lines above, *prenzie Angelo;* both of them evident corruptions, there being no such word. The common reading in both places is *princely*. Warburton would have it *priestly*, and Tieck suggests

If I would yield him my virginity,
Thou might'st be freed?

Claud. O, heavens! it cannot be.

Isab. Yes, he would give't thee, from this rank offence,
So to offend him still.[17] This night's the time
That I should do what I abhor to name,
Or else thou diest to-morrow.

Claud. Thou shalt not do't.

Isab. O! were it but my life,
I'd throw it down for your deliverance
As frankly[18] as a pin.

Claud. Thanks, dear Isabel.

Isab. Be ready, Claudio, for your death to-morrow.

Claud. Yes.—Has he affections in him,
That thus can make him bite the law by the nose,
When he would force it?[19] Sure it is no sin;
Or of the deadly seven it is the least.

Isab. Which is the least?

precise, which is adopted by Knight and Verplanck. *Precise* certainly suits well with the character of the Deputy, and the Duke has already said,—"Lord Angelo is *precise*." And the use, so familiar in the Poet's time, of *precisian* for *puritan*, would render the term as intelligible to an audience as it is appropriate to the person.—*Guards* were trimmings, facings, ornaments; and as Angelo was a precisian in morals and manners, he would naturally be so likewise in his dress: the "pride" he takes in his "gravity" would lead him to affect plainness of decoration. Halliwell objects to *precise*, that it makes the metre irregular; but such irregularities appear to have been oftener sought than shunned by the Poet. H.

[17] That is, "*from the time* of my committing this offence, you might persist in sinning with safety."

[18] *Frankly*, freely.

[19] "Has *he* passions that impel him to transgress the law at the very moment that he is enforcing it against others? Surely then it cannot be a sin so very heinous, since Angelo, who is so wise, will venture it." Shakespeare shows his knowledge of human nature in the conduct of Claudio.

Claud. If it were damnable, he, being so wise,
Why, would he for the momentary trick,
Be perdurably fin'd? — O Isabel!

Isab. What says my brother?

Claud. Death is a fearful thing

Isab. And shamed life a hateful.

Claud. Ay, but to die, and go we know not where;
To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot;
This sensible warm motion to become
A kneaded clod; and the delighted spirit[20]
To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside
In thrilling region of thick-ribbed ice;[21]

[20] This passage is a standing puzzle to commentators; "fiery floods" and "region of thick-ribbed ice" being, as one would think, among the last places to be *delighted* in. The most common explanation is, that *delighted spirit* means the spirit that has been delighted, or is accustomed to delight. Another, and perhaps a better explanation, is, that the passive form is here used in an active sense, *delighted* for *delighting* or *delightful*, — an usage quite frequent in Shakespeare; as in Othello, Act i. sc. 3: "If virtue no *delighted* beauty lack;" and in The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act iv. sc. 6: "Give our hearts *united* ceremony." But the best suggestion we have seen is, that the word is here used in the sense of *removed from* or *deprived of* the light, as if it were written *de-lighted;* which is a strictly classical use of the prepositive *de*, and certainly has the merit of harmony with the context. The use of the Latin prepositive *de, di, dis,* in combination with native words, is so common in Shakespeare and other writers of that time that it is scarce worth the while to cite examples. Thus, Shakespeare has *dislimns* and *dismask'd;* Drayton, *diswitted;* Daniel, *disweaponing;* Feltham, *disman'd;* Drant, *dehusk'd;* Speed, *deking'd;* and Giles Fletcher, in his fine poem, Christ's Victory and Triumph, thus describes the passing away of an eclipse of the sun:

> "But soon as he again *deshadow'd* is,
> Restoring the blind world his blemish'd sight,
> As though another day were newly his,
> The cozened birds busily take their flight,
> And wonder at the shortness of the night." H.

[21] So, in Ben Jonson's Catiline, Act i sc. 1: "We are spirit-bound in *ribs of ice,* our whole bloods are one stone, and honour cannot thaw us;" and in Paradise Lost, Book ii.:

To be imprison'd in the viewless winds,
And blown with restless violence round about
The pendent world; or to be worse than worst
Of those, that lawless and incertain thoughts
Imagine howling! — 'tis too horrible!
The weariest and most loathed worldly life,
That age, ache, penury, and imprisonment
Can lay on nature, is a paradise
To what we fear of death.

Isab. Alas! alas!

Claud. Sweet sister, let me live:
What sin you do to save a brother's life,
Nature dispenses with the deed so far,
That it becomes a virtue.

Isab. O, you beast!
O, faithless coward! O, dishonest wretch!
Wilt thou be made a man out of my vice?
Is't not a kind of incest, to take life
From thine own sister's shame? What should I think?
Heaven shield, my mother play'd my father fair!
For such a warped slip of wilderness[22]
Ne'er issued from his blood. Take my defiance:[23]
Die; perish! might but my bending down
Reprieve thee from thy fate, it should proceed:
I'll pray a thousand prayers for thy death,
No word to save thee.

Claud. Nay, hear me, Isabel.

Isab. O, fie, fie, fie!
Thy sin's not accidental, but a trade:

> "From beds of raging fire to starve in ice
> Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
> Immovable, infix'd, and frozen round,
> Periods of time."

[22] *Wilderness* for wildness.

[23] That is, my refusal.

Mercy to thee would prove itself a bawd:
'Tis best that thou diest quickly. [*Going*
Claud. O, hear me, Isabella!

Re-enter DUKE.

Duke. Vouchsafe a word, young sister; but one word.

Isab. What is your will?

Duke. Might you dispense with your leisure, I would by and by have some speech with you: the satisfaction I would require is likewise your own benefit.

Isab. I have no superfluous leisure: my stay must be stolen out of other affairs; but I will attend you a while.

Duke. [*Aside to* CLAUDIO.] Son, I have overheard what hath pass'd between you and your sister. Angelo had never the purpose to corrupt her; only he hath made an assay of her virtue, to practise his judgment with the disposition of natures: She, having the truth of honour in her, hath made him that gracious denial which he is most glad to receive: I am confessor to Angelo, and I know this to be true; therefore prepare yourself to death: Do not satisfy your resolution [24] with hopes that are fallible: to morrow you must die: Go to your knees, and make ready.

Claud. Let me ask my sister pardon. I am so out of love with life, that I will sue to be rid of it.

Duke. Hold [25] you there: Farewell.

[*Exit* CLAUDIO

[24] *Satisfy* was used by old writers in the sense of to *stay, stop quench,* or *stint;* as in the phrase,—"Sorrow is *satisfied* with tears." To satisfy or *stint* hunger; to *quench* or satisfy thirst.

[25] *Hold you there:* continue in that resolution

Re-enter Provost.

Provost, a word with you.

Prov. What's your will, father?

Duke. That now you are come, you will be gone: Leave me awhile with the maid: my mind promises with my habit; no loss shall touch her by my company.

Prov. In good time.[26] [*Exit Provost.*

Duke. The hand that hath made you fair hath made you good: the goodness that is cheap in beauty makes beauty brief in goodness; but grace, being the soul of your complexion, shall keep the body of it ever fair. The assault that Angelo hath made to you fortune hath convey'd to my understanding; and, but that frailty hath examples for his falling, I should wonder at Angelo. How would you do to content this substitute, and to save your brother?

Isab. I am now going to resolve him: I had rather my brother die by the law, than my son should be unlawfully born. But O, how much is the good Duke deceiv'd in Angelo! If ever he return, and I can speak to him, I will open my lips in vain, or discover his government.

Duke. That shall not be much amiss: Yet, as the matter now stands, he will avoid your accusation; he made trial of you only. — Therefore, fasten your ear on my advisings: to the love I have in doing good a remedy presents itself. I do make myself believe, that you may most uprighteously do a poor wronged lady a merited benefit; redeem your brother from the angry law; do no stain to your own gracious person; and much please the absent

[26] That is, *à la bonne heure*, so be it, very well.

Duke, if, peradventure, he shall ever return to have hearing of this business.

Isab. Let me hear you speak further: I have spirit to do any thing that appears not foul in the truth of my spirit.

Duke. Virtue is bold, and goodness never fearful. Have you not heard speak of Mariana, the sister of Frederick, the great soldier who miscarried at sea?

Isab. I have heard of the lady, and good words went with her name.

Duke. She should this Angelo have married; he was affianced to her by oath, and the nuptial appointed: between which time of the contract and limit[27] of the solemnity, her brother Frederick was wreck'd at sea, having in that perished vessel the dowry of his sister. But mark how heavily this befel to the poor gentlewoman: there she lost a noble and renowned brother, in his love toward her ever most kind and natural; with him the portion and sinew of her fortune, her marriage dowry; with both, her combinate[28] husband, this well-seeming Angelo.

Isab. Can this be so? Did Angelo so leave her?

Duke. Left her in her tears, and dried not one of them with his comfort; swallowed his vows whole, pretending in her discoveries of dishonour: in few, bestow'd her on her own lamentation,[29] which she yet wears for his sake; and he, a marble to her tears, is washed with them, but relents not.

Isab. What a merit were it in death, to take this poor maid from the world! What corruption in this

[27] That is, appointed time.
[28] That is, betrothed.
[29] That is, gave her up to her sorrows.

life, that it will let this man live! — But how out of this can she avail?

Duke. It is a rupture that you may easily heal; and the cure of it not only saves your brother, but keeps you from dishonour in doing it.

Isab. Show me how, good father.

Duke. This forenamed maid hath yet in her the continuance of her first affection: his unjust unkindness, that in all reason should have quenched her love, hath, like an impediment in the current, made it more violent and unruly. Go you to Angelo; answer his requiring with a plausible obedience; agree with his demands to the point: only refer yourself [30] to this advantage, — first, that your stay with him may not be long; that the time may have all shadow and silence in it; and the place answer to convenience. This being granted in course, now follows all: We shall advise this wronged maid to stead up your appointment, go in your place; if the encounter acknowledge itself hereafter, it may compel him to her recompense: and here, by this, is your brother saved, your honour untainted, the poor Mariana advantaged, and the corrupt deputy foiled. The maid will I frame, and make fit for his attempt. If you think well to carry this, as you may, the doubleness of the benefit defends the deceit from reproof. What think you of it?

Isab. The image of it gives me content already; and I trust it will grow to a most prosperous perfection.

Duke. It lies much in your holding up: Haste

[30] *Refer yourself*, have recourse to.

[31] That is, stripped of his covering or disguise, his affectation of virtue; *desquamatus*. A metaphor of a similar nature has before occurred in this play, taken from the barking, peeling, or stripping of trees.

you speedily to Angelo: if for this night he entreat you to his bed, give him promise of satisfaction I will presently to St. Luke's; there, at the moated grange, resides this dejected Mariana:[32] At that place call upon me; and despatch with Angelo, that it may be quickly.

Isab. I thank you for this comfort: Fare you well, good father. [*Exeunt severally*

SCENE II. The Street before the Prison.

Enter DUKE, *as a Friar; to him* ELBOW, *Clown, and Officers.*

Elb. Nay, if there be no remedy for it, but that you will needs buy and sell men and women like beasts, we shall have all the world drink brown and white bastard.[1]

Duke. O, heavens! what stuff is here?

[32] The dreary and desolate solitude of Mariana at the moated grange is wrought out with great power by Mr. Tennyson, in a poem from which we have room for but one stanza:

"Her tears fell with the dews at even,
Her tears fell ere the dews were dried;
She could not look on the sweet heaven,
Either at morn or eventide.
After the flitting of the bats,
When thickest dark did trance the sky,
She drew her casement curtain by,
And glanc'd athwart the glooming flats
She only said, 'The night is dreary —
He cometh not,' she said;
She said, 'I am aweary, aweary;
I would that I were dead!'"

The whole poem is a rare specimen in the art of creating imagery so fitted to a given tone of feeling as to reproduce the feeling itself. — A *grange* was a large farm-house, such as are often kept for summer residence by wealthy citizens. The grange was sometimes *moated* for defence and safety. H.

[1] *Bastard.* A sweet wine, Raisin wine, according to Minshew

Clo. 'Twas never merry world, since, of two usuries, the merriest was put down, and the worser allow'd by order of law a furr'd gown to keep him warm; and furr'd with fox and lamb-skins [2] too, to signify that craft, being richer than innocency, stands for the facing.

Elb. Come your way, sir: — Bless you, good father friar.

Duke. And you, good brother father: [3] What offence hath this man made you, sir?

Elb. Marry, sir, he hath offended the law; and, sir, we take him to be a thief too, sir; for we have found upon him, sir, a strange pick-lock,[4] which we have sent to the deputy.

Duke. Fie, sirrah! a bawd, a wicked bawd!
The evil that thou causest to be done,
That is thy means to live: Do thou but think
What 'tis to cram a maw, or clothe a back,
From such a filthy vice: say to thyself, —
From their abominable and beastly touches
I drink, I eat, array myself, and live.
Canst thou believe thy living is a life,
So stinkingly depending? Go, mend; go, mend.

Clo. Indeed, it does stink in some sort, sir; but yet, sir, I would prove ——

Duke. Nay, if the devil have given thee proofs for sin,

[2] Perhaps we should read "fox *on* lamb-skins," otherwise craft will not stand for the facing. Fox-skins and lamb-skins were both used as facings. So, in Characterismi, 1631: "An usurer is an old fox clad in lamb-skin."

[3] The Duke humorously calls him *brother father*, because he had called him father friar, which is equivalent to *father brother*, friar being derived from *frère*, Fr.

[4] It is not necessary to take honest Pompey for a housebreaker: the locks he had occasion to pick were Spanish padlocks. In Jonson's Volpone, Corvino threatens to make his wife wear one of these strange contrivances.

Thou wilt prove his. Take him to prison, officer:
Correction and instruction must both work,
Ere this rude beast will profit.

Elb. He must before the deputy, sir; he has given him warning: The deputy cannot abide a whoremaster: if he be a whoremonger, and comes before him, he were as good go a mile on his errand.

Duke. That we were all, as some would seem to be,
Free from our faults, as faults from seeming free![b]

Enter LUCIO.

Elb. His neck will come to your waist; a cord,[c] sir.

Clo. I spy comfort: I cry, bail: Here's a gentleman, and a friend of mine.

Lucio. How now, noble Pompey? What, at the wheels of Cæsar? Art thou led in triumph? What, is there none of Pygmalion's images, newly made woman,[7] to be had now, for putting the hand in the pocket and extracting it clutch'd? What reply? Ha! What say'st thou to this tune, matter, and method? Is't not drown'd i'the last rain? Ha! What say'st thou, trot? Is the world as it was, man? Which is the way? Is it sad, and few words? Or how? The trick of it?

Duke. Still thus, and thus: still worse!

Lucio. How doth my dear morsel, thy mistress? Procures she still? Ha!

[b] That is, as free from faults as faults are from *seemliness*. H.

[c] His neck will be tied, like your waist, with a cord. The friar wore a rope for a girdle.

[7] That is, have you no new courtesans to recommend to your customers?

Clo. Troth, sir, she hath eaten up all her beef, and she is herself in the tub.[8]

Lucio. Why, 'tis good; it is the right of it: it must be so: Ever your fresh whore, and your powder'd bawd: an unshunn'd[9] consequence; it must be so: Art going to prison, Pompey?

Clo. Yes, faith, sir.

Lucio. Why, 'tis not amiss, Pompey: Farewell; go; say I sent thee thither. For debt, Pompey? Or how?

Elb. For being a bawd, for being a bawd.

Lucio. Well, then imprison him: If imprisonment be the due of a bawd, why, 'tis his right: Bawd is he, doubtless, and of antiquity too; bawd-born Farewell, good Pompey: Commend me to the prison, Pompey: You will turn good husband now, Pompey; you will keep the house.[10]

Clo. I hope, sir, your good worship will be my bail.

Lucio. No, indeed, will I not, Pompey; it is not the wear.[11] I will pray, Pompey, to increase your bondage: if you take it not patiently, why, your mettle is the more: Adieu, trusty Pompey.—Bless you, friar.

Duke. And you.

Lucio. Does Bridget paint still, Pompey? Ha!

Elb. Come your ways, sir; come.

Clo. You will not bail me then, sir?

Lucio. Then, Pompey? nor now.—What news abroad, friar? What news?

Elb. Come your ways, sir; come.

[8] The method of cure for a certain disease was grossly called *the powdering tub.*

[9] That is, inevitable.

[10] That is, stay at home, alluding to the etymology of *husband*

[11] That is, fashion.

Lucio. Go, — to kennel, Pompey, go:

[*Exeunt* ELBOW, *Clown, and Officers.*

What news, friar, of the Duke?

Duke. I know none: Can you tell me of any?

Lucio. Some say he is with the emperor of Russia; other some, he is in Rome: But where is he, think you?

Duke. I know not where: but wheresoever, I wish him well.

Lucio. It was a mad fantastical trick of him, to steal from the state, and usurp the beggary he was never born to. Lord Angelo dukes it well in his absence: he puts transgression to't.

Duke. He does well in't.

Lucio. A little more lenity to lechery would do no harm in him: something too crabbed that way, friar.

Duke. It is too general a vice, and severity must cure it.

Lucio. Yes, in good sooth, the vice is of a great kindred; it is well allied: but it is impossible to extirp it quite, friar, till eating and drinking be put down. They say this Angelo was not made by man and woman, after the downright way of creation: Is it true, think you?

Duke. How should he be made then?

Lucio. Some report a sea-maid spawn'd him: — Some, that he was begot between two stock-fishes; — But it is certain, that when he makes water his urine is congeal'd ice; that I know to be true: and he is a motion ingenerative; that's infallible.

Duke. You are pleasant, sir; and speak apace.

Lucio. Why, what a ruthless thing is this in him for the rebellion of a cod-piece to take away the

[12] That is, a puppet, or moving body.

life of a man? Would the Duke that is absent have done this? Ere he would have hang'd a man for the getting a hundred bastards, he would have paid for the nursing of a thousand: He had some feeling of the sport; he knew the service, and that instructed him to mercy.

Duke. I never heard the absent Duke much detected [13] for women: he was not inclin'd that way.

Lucio. O, sir! you are deceiv'd.

Duke. 'Tis not possible.

Lucio. Who? not the Duke? yes, your beggar of fifty; — and his use was, to put a ducat in her clack-dish: [14] the Duke had crotchets in him: He would be drunk too; that let me inform you.

Duke. You do him wrong, surely.

Lucio. Sir, I was an inward [15] of his: A shy fellow was the Duke: and I believe I know the cause of his withdrawing.

Duke. What, I pr'ythee, might be the cause?

Lucio. No, — pardon; — 'tis a secret must be lock'd within the teeth and the lips: but this I can let you understand, — The greater file [16] of the subject held the Duke to be wise.

Duke. Wise? why, no question but he was.

Lucio. A very superficial, ignorant, unweighing [17] fellow.

[13] *Detected* for suspected. See The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act. iii. sc. 5, and note 4.

[14] A wooden dish with a movable cover, formerly carried by beggars, which they *clacked* and clattered to show that it was empty. It was one mode of attracting attention. Lepers and other paupers deemed infectious originally used it, that the sound might give warning not to approach too near, and alms be given without touching the object. The custom of *clacking* at Easter is not yet quite disused in some counties.

[15] That is, intimate.

[16] "The *greater file*," the majority of his subjects.

[17] That is, inconsiderate.

Duke. Either this is envy in you, folly, or mistaking: the very stream of his life, and the business he hath helmed,[18] must, upon a warranted need, give him a better proclamation. Let him be but testimonied in his own bringings forth, and he shall appear to the envious a scholar, a statesman, and a soldier: Therefore you speak unskilfully, or, if your knowledge be more, it is much darken'd in your malice.

Lucio. Sir, I know him, and I love him.

Duke. Love talks with better knowledge, and knowledge with dearer love.

Lucio. Come, sir, I know what I know.

Duke. I can hardly believe that, since you know not what you speak. But, if ever the Duke return, (as our prayers are he may,) let me desire you to make your answer before him: If it be honest you have spoke, you have courage to maintain it: I am bound to call upon you; and, I pray you, your name?

Lucio. Sir, my name is Lucio; well known to the Duke.

Duke. He shall know you better, sir, if I may live to report you.

Lucio I fear you not.

Duke. O! you hope the Duke will return no more; or you imagine me too unhurtful an opposite:[19] But, indeed, I can do you little harm: you'll forswear this again.

Lucio. I'll be hang'd first: thou art deceiv'd in me, friar. But no more of this: Canst thou tell if Claudio die to-morrow, or no?

Duke. Why should he die, sir?

Lucio. Why? for filling a bottle with a tun-dish

[18] Guided, steered through, a metaphor from navigation.
[19] *Opposite*, opponent.

I would the Duke we talk of were return'd again: this ungenitur'd [20] agent will unpeople the province with continency; sparrows must not build in his house-eaves, because they are lecherous. The Duke yet would have dark deeds darkly answered; he would never bring them to light: would he were return'd! Marry, this Claudio is condemn'd for untrussing. Farewell, good friar; I pr'ythee, pray for me. The Duke, I say to thee again, would eat mutton [21] on Fridays. He's not past it yet; and I say to thee, he would mouth with a beggar, though she smelt [22] brown bread and garlic: say that I said so. Farewell. [*Exit.*

Duke. No might nor greatness in mortality
Can censure 'scape: back-wounding calumny
The whitest virtue strikes: What king so strong,
Can tie the gall up in the slanderous tongue?
But who comes here?

Enter ESCALUS, *Provost, Bawd, and Officers.*

Escal. Go: away with her to prison.

Bawd. Good my lord, be good to me; your honour is accounted a merciful man: good my lord.

Escal. Double and treble admonition, and still forfeit [23] in the same kind? This would make mercy swear, and play the tyrant.

[20] That is, unfathered, not begotten after the ordinary course of nature; in accordance with what Lucio says of him a little before. The word seems to be formed from *genitoirs*, which occurs several times in Holland's Pliny, and comes from the French *genitoires*. H.

[21] A wench was called a *laced mutton*. In Doctor Faustus, 1604, Lechery says, "I am one that loves an inch of raw *mutton* better than an ell of stock-fish." See The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act. i. sc. 1, and note 9.

[22] Smelt, for smelt *of*.

[23] *Forfeit*, transgress, offend, from *forfaire*, Fr

Prov. A bawd of eleven years' continuance, may it please your honour.

Bawd. My lord, this is one Lucio's information against me: Mistress Kate Keep-down was with child by him in the Duke's time; he promis'd her marriage: his child is a year and a quarter old, come Philip and Jacob: I have kept it myself; and see how he goes about to abuse me.

Escal. That fellow is a fellow of much license: let him be call'd before us. — Away with her to prison: Go to; no more words. [*Exeunt Bawd and Officers.*] Provost, my brother Angelo will not be alter'd; Claudio must die to-morrow: Let him be furnish'd with divines, and have all charitable preparation: if my brother wrought by my pity, it should not be so with him.

Prov. So please you, this friar hath been with him, and advis'd him for the entertainment of death.

Escal. Good even, good father.

Duke. Bliss and goodness on you!

Escal. Of whence are you?

Duke. Not of this country, though my chance is now
To use it for my time: I am a brother
Of gracious order, late come from the see,
In special business from his holiness.

Escal. What news abroad i'the world?

Duke. None, but that there is so great a fever on goodness, that the dissolution of it must cure it: novelty is only in request; and as it is as dangerous to be aged in any kind of course, as it is virtuous to be constant in any undertaking, there is scarce truth enough alive, to make societies secure; but security enough, to make fellowships accurs'd:[24] Much upon

[24] The allusion is to those legal *securities* into which fellowship

this riddle runs the wisdom of the world. This news is old enough, yet it is every day's news. I pray you, sir, of what disposition was the Duke?

Escal. One that, above all other strifes, contended especially to know himself.

Duke. What pleasure was he given to?

Escal. Rather rejoicing to see another merry, than merry at any thing which profess'd to make him rejoice: a gentleman of all temperance. But leave we him to his events, with a prayer they may prove prosperous; and let me desire to know how you find Claudio prepar'd. I am made to understand, that you have lent him visitation.

Duke. He professes to have received no sinister measure from his judge, but most willingly humbles himself to the determination of justice: yet had he framed to himself, by the instruction of his frailty, many deceiving promises of life; which I, by my good leisure, have discredited to him, and now is he resolv'd[25] to die.

Escal. You have paid the heavens your function, and the prisoner the very debt of your calling. I have labour'd for the poor gentleman, to the extremest shore of my modesty; but my brother justice have I found so severe, that he hath forc'd me to tell him, he is indeed — justice.[26]

Duke. If his own life answer the straitness of his proceeding, it shall become him well; wherein, if he chance to fail, he hath sentenc'd himself.

Escal. I am going to visit the prisoner: Fare you well.

leads men to enter for each other. For this quibble Shakespeare has high authority; "He that hateth *suretyship is sure.*" Prov. xi. 15.

[25] That is, satisfied; probably because conviction leads to decision or resolution.

[26] *Summum jus, summa injuria.*

Duke. Peace be with you!

[*Exeunt* ESCALUS *and* ***Provost***

He who the sword of Heaven will bear
Should be as holy as severe;
Pattern in himself to know,
Grace to stand, and virtue go;[27]
More nor less to others paying,
Than by self-offences weighing.
Shame to him, whose cruel striking
Kills for faults of his own liking!
Twice treble shame on Angelo,
To weed my vice,[28] and let his grow!
O! what may man within him hide,
Though angel on the outward side!
How may likeness wade in crimes!
Making practice on the times,
To draw with idle spiders' strings
Most ponderous and substantial things![29]

[27] Coleridge, in his Literary Remains, remarks upon this passage.—"Worse metre indeed, but better English would be:

'Grace to stand, virtue to go.'" H.

[28] The Duke's *vice* may be explained by what he says himself Act i. sc. 4: "'Twas *my fault* to give the people scope." Angelo's vice requires no explanation.

[29] We here give the reading of the original, except the changeing of *made* into *wade;* an emendation proposed by Mr. Halliwell, and so apt that we have ventured to adopt it. How easy it were for a printer to put *m* for *w*, or *vice versa*, need not be argued; and an instance of it has already occurred in this play, Act ii. sc. 3, where the original reads *flawes* for *flames*. With this change, the passage, though rather dark in itself, is intelligible enough, when we consider that the speaker has Angelo in his mind; who, bad as he is, has by his hypocrisy managed to raise himself as high as merit could lift him. *Likeness* apparently has much the same meaning here as what the Poet elsewhere calls "virtuous-seeming." So that the passage may be rendered thus: How may seeming virtue, unsubstantial as it is, and wickedly put on, by practising upon the times draw to itself the greatest of earthly honours and emoluments, even while it is wading or rioting in crime! H.

Craft against vice I must apply:
With Angelo to-night shall lie
His old betrothed, but despised;
So disguise shall, by the disguised,
Pay with falsehood false exacting,
And perform an old contracting. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. A Room at the Moated Grange.

MARIANA *discovered sitting: a Boy singing.*

Song.[1]

Take, O! take those lips away,
That so sweetly were forsworn;
And those eyes, the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn:
But my kisses bring again,
Bring again,
Seals of love, but seal'd in vain,
Seal'd in vain.

[1] It does not appear certain to whom this beautiful little song rightly belongs. It is found with an additional stanza in Fletcher's Bloody Brother. Mr. Malone prints it as Shakespeare's, Mr. Boswell thinks Fletcher has the best claim to it, Mr. Weber that Shakespeare may have written the first stanza, and Fletcher the second. It may indeed be the property of some unknown or forgotten author. Be this as it may, the reader will be pleased to have the second stanza:—

"Hide, O! hide those hills of snow
Which thy frozen bosom bears,
On whose tops the pinks that grow
Are of those that April wears.
But first set my poor heart free,
Bound in those icy chains by thee."

Mari. Break off thy song, and haste thee quick away:
Here comes a man of comfort, whose advice
Hath often still'd my brawling discontent.—
[*Exit Boy*

Enter DUKE.

I cry you mercy, sir; and well could wish
You had not found me here so musical:
Let me excuse me, and believe me so,—
My mirth it much displeas'd, but pleas'd my woe.[2]

Duke. 'Tis good: though music oft hath such a charm,
To make bad good, and good provoke to harm.
I pray you, tell me, hath any body inquir'd for me here to-day? much upon this time have I promis'd here to meet.

Mari. You have not been inquir'd after: I have sat here all day.

Enter ISABELLA.

Duke. I do constantly believe you:—The time is come, even now. I shall crave your forbearance a little: may be, I will call upon you anon, for some advantage to yourself.

Mari. I am always bound to you. [*Exit*

Duke. Very well met, and welcome.
What is the news from this good deputy?

Isab. He hath a garden circummur'd[3] with brick,
Whose western side is with a vineyard back'd;
And to that vineyard is a planched[4] gate,
That makes his opening with this bigger key:
This other doth command a little door,

[2] Though the music soothed my sorrows, it had no tendency to produce light merriment.

[3] *Circummur'd*, walled round. [4] *Planched*, planked, wooden

Which from the vineyard to the garden leads;
There have I made my promise, upon the
Heavy middle of the night to call upon him.

Duke. But shall you on your knowledge find this way?

Isab. I have ta'en a due and wary note upon't:
With whispering and most guilty diligence,
In action all of precept, he did show me
The way twice o'er.

Duke. Are there no other tokens
Between you 'greed, concerning her observance?

Isab. No, none, but only a repair i'the dark;
And that I have possess'd[5] him, my most stay
Can be but brief: for I have made him know
I have a servant comes with me along,
That stays[6] upon me; whose persuasion is,
I come about my brother.

Duke. 'Tis well borne up.
I have not yet made known to Mariana
A word of this: — What, ho! within! come forth!

Re-enter MARIANA.

I pray you, be acquainted with this maid:
She comes to do you good.

Isab. I do desire the like.

Duke. Do you persuade yourself that I respect you?

Mari. Good friar, I know you do; and have found it.

Duke. Take, then, this your companion by the hand,
Who hath a story ready for your ear:

[5] That is, *informed*. Thus Shylock says, — "I have *possess'd* your grace of what I purpose."

[6] *Stays*, waits

I shall attend your leisure; but make haste;
The vaporous night approaches.

Mari. Will't please you walk aside?

[*Exeunt* MARI. *and* ISAB

Duke. O place and greatness! millions of false eyes
Are stuck upon thee. Volumes of report
Run with these false and most contrarious quests[7]
Upon thy doings: thousand escapes[8] of wit
Make thee the father of their idle dream,
And rack thee in their fancies!

Re-enter MARIANA *and* ISABELLA.

Welcome! How agreed?

Isab. She'll take the enterprise upon her, father,
If you advise it.

Duke. It is not my consent,
But my entreaty too.

Isab. Little have you to say,
When you depart from him, but, soft and low,
"Remember now my brother."

Mari. Fear me not.

Duke. Nor, gentle daughter, fear you not at all
He is your husband on a pre-contract:
To bring you thus together, 'tis no sin;
Sith that the justice of your title to him
Doth flourish[9] the deceit. Come, let us go:
Our corn's to reap, for yet our tilth's[10] to sow.

[*Exeunt.*

[7] *Quests*, inquisitions, inquiries.

[8] *Escapes*, sallies, sportive wiles.

[9] That is, *ornament*, embellish an action that would otherwise seem ugly.

[10] *Tilth* here means land prepared for sowing. The old copy reads *tithe;* the emendation is Warburton's. See Act i. sc. 5 note 5.

SCENE II. A Room in the Prison.

Enter Provost and Clown.

Prov Come hither, sirrah: Can you cut off a man's head?

Clo. If the man be a bachelor, sir, I can; but if he be a married man, he is his wife's head, and I can never cut off a woman's head.

Prov. Come, sir, leave me your snatches, and yield me a direct answer. To-morrow morning are to die Claudio and Barnardine: Here is in our prison a common executioner, who in his office lacks a helper: if you will take it on you to assist him, it shall redeem you from your gyves;[1] if not, you shall have your full time of imprisonment, and your deliverance with an unpitied[2] whipping; for you have been a notorious bawd.

Clo. Sir, I have been an unlawful bawd, time out of mind; but yet I will be content to be a lawful hangman. I would be glad to receive some instruction from my fellow-partner.

Prov. What ho, Abhorson! Where's Abhorson, there!

Enter ABHORSON.

Abhor. Do you call, sir?

Prov. Sirrah, here's a fellow will help you to-morrow in your execution: If you think it meet, compound with him by the year, and let him abide here with you; if not, use him for the present, and dismiss him: He cannot plead his estimation with you; he hath been a bawd.

[1] That is, fetters.

[2] That is, a whipp'ng that none shall pity.

Abhor. A bawd, sir? Fie upon him! he will discredit our mystery.

Prov. Go to, sir; you weigh equally: a feather will turn the scale. [*Exit.*

Clo. Pray, sir, by your good favour, (for, surely, sir, a good favour[3] you have, but that you have a hanging look,) do you call, sir, your occupation a mystery?

Abhor. Ay, sir; a mystery.

Clo. Painting, sir, I have heard say, is a mystery; and your whores, sir, being members of my occupation, using painting, do prove my occupation a mystery: but what mystery there should be in hanging, if I should be hang'd, I cannot imagine.

Abhor. Sir, it is a mystery.

Clo. Proof?

Abhor. Every true[4] man's apparel fits your thief—

Clo.[5] If it be too little for your thief, your true man thinks it big enough; if it be too big for your thief, your thief thinks it little enough: so every true man's apparel fits your thief.

Re-enter Provost.

Prov. Are you agreed?

Clo. Sir, I will serve him; for I do find your

[3] *Favour* is countenance. [4] That is, honest.

[5] So in the original: but the most of modern editions put this speech into the mouth of Abhorson; whereas such a lively, flippant piece of logic seems quite unsuited to so grave, slow-tongued, sententious a person. The Clown asks for proof that "hanging is a mystery;" and the hangman begins with a creeping, roundabout answer, when the Clown, being nimbler-witted, catches his method of proof, darts ahead of him in the argument, and proves not indeed that hanging is a mystery, but that something else is.

H.

hangman is a more penitent trade than your bawd he doth oftener ask forgiveness.[6]

Prov. You, sirrah, provide your block and your axe to-morrow four o'clock.

Abhor. Come on, bawd; I will instruct thee in my trade: follow.

Clo. I do desire to learn, sir; and I hope, if you have occasion to use me for your own turn, you shall find me yare;[7] for, truly, sir, for your kindness, I owe you a good turn.

Prov. Call hither Barnardine and Claudio:

[*Exeunt Clown and* ABHORSON.

One has my pity; not a jot the other,
Being a murderer, though he were my brother.

Enter CLAUDIO.

Look, here's the warrant, Claudio, for thy death:
'Tis now dead midnight, and by eight to-morrow
Thou must be made immortal. Where's Barnardine?

Claud. As fast lock'd up in sleep, as guiltless labour
When it lies starkly[8] in the traveller's bones:
He will not wake.

Prov. Who can do good on him?
Well, go, prepare yourself. But hark! what noise?

[*Knocking within.*

Heaven give your spirits comfort! — By and by: —

[*Exit* CLAUDIO.

I hope it is some pardon, or reprieve,
For the most gentle Claudio. — Welcome, father.

[6] It was formerly the custom for an executioner, before proceeding to his office, to *ask forgiveness* of the person to be executed.

[7] That is, ready, nimble.

[8] That is, stiffly

Enter DUKE.

Duke. The best and wholesomest spirits of the night
Envelop you, good provost! Who call'd here of late?

Prov. None, since the curfew rung.

Duke. Not Isabel?

Prov. No.

Duke. They will then, ere't be long.

Prov. What comfort is for Claudio?

Duke. There's some in hope.

Prov. It is a bitter deputy.

Duke. Not so, not so: his life is parallel'd
Even with the stroke[9] and line of his great justice.
He doth with holy abstinence subdue
That in himself, which he spurs on his power
To qualify[10] in others: were he meal'd[11]
With that which he corrects, then were he tyrannous; [*Knocking within.*
But this being so, he's just.—Now are they come.—
[*Exit Provost.*
This is a gentle provost: Seldom—when
The steeled jailer is the friend of men.—
How now! What noise? That spirit's possess'd with haste,
That wounds the unsisting[12] postern with these strokes.

[9] *Stroke* is here put for the *stroke* of a pen, or a line.

[10] To *qualify* is to temper, to moderate.

[11] *Meal'd* appears to mean here sprinkled, o'erdusted, defiled.

[12] So in the original. Sir William Blackstone suggests that *unsisting* may mean "*never at rest*, always opening." Mr. Collier proposes *resisting*, which might easily be misprinted *unsisting*, and seems to agree better with the subject; the Provost *wounding* the door *with strokes*, because it *resisted*, or stuck in the casement. Nevertheless, we adhere to the original. H

Re-enter Provost.

Prov. [*Speaking to one at the door.*] There he must stay, until the officer
Arise to let him in: he is call'd up.

Duke. Have you no countermand for Claudio yet,
But he must die to-morrow?

Prov. None, sir, none.

Duke. As near the dawning, provost, as it is,
You shall hear more ere morning.

Prov. Happily,[13]
You something know; yet, I believe, there comes
No countermand: no such example have we:
Besides, upon the very siege[14] of justice,
Lord Angelo hath to the public ear
Profess'd the contrary.

Enter a Messenger.

This is his lordship's man.

Duke. And here comes Claudio's pardon.

Mess. My lord hath sent you this note; and by me this further charge, that you swerve not from the smallest article of it, neither in time, matter, or other circumstance. Good-morrow; for, as I take it, it is almost day.

Prov. I shall obey him. [*Exit Messenger.*

Duke. [*Aside.*] This is his pardon, purchas'd by such sin;
For which the pardoner himself is in:
Hence hath offence his quick celerity,
When it is borne in high authority.
When vice makes mercy, mercy's so extended,

[13] *Haply, perhaps,* the old orthography of the word.
[14] That is, seat

That for the fault's love is the offender friended. — Now, sir, what news?

Prov. I told you: Lord Angelo, be-like, thinking me remiss in mine office, awakens me with this unwonted putting on:[15] methinks, strangely; for he hath not us'd it before.

Duke. Pray you, let's hear.

Prov. [*Reads.*] "Whatsoever you may hear to the contrary, let Claudio be executed by four of the clock; and, in the afternoon, Barnardine: For my better satisfaction, let me have Claudio's head sent me by five. Let this be duly performed; with a thought, that more depends on it than we must yet deliver. Thus fail not to do your office, as you will answer it at your peril."
What say you to this, sir?

Duke. What is that Barnardine, who is to be executed in the afternoon?

Prov. A Bohemian born; but here nurs'd up and bred: one that is a prisoner nine years old.[16]

Duke. How came it, that the absent Duke had not either deliver'd him to his liberty, or executed him? I have heard it was ever his manner to do so.

Prov. His friends still wrought reprieves for him: and, indeed, his fact, till now in the government of lord Angelo, came not to an undoubtful proof.

Duke. Is it now apparent?

Prov. Most manifest, and not denied by himself

Duke. Hath he borne himself penitently in prison? How seems he to be touch'd?

Prov. A man that apprehends death no more dreadfully, but as a drunken sleep; careless, reckless, and fearless of what's past, present, or to come insensible of mortality, and desperately mortal.[17]

[15] *Putting on* is spur, incitement.
[16] That is, nine years in prison.
[17] Perhaps we should read *mortally desperate;* as we have

Duke. He wants advice.

Prov. He will hear none: He hath evermore had the liberty of the prison: give him leave to escape hence, he would not: drunk many times a day, if not many days entirely drunk. We have very oft awak'd him, as if to carry him to execution, and show'd him a seeming warrant for it: it hath not moved him at all.

Duke. More of him anon. There is written in your brow, provost, honesty and constancy: if I read it not truly, my ancient skill beguiles me; but in the boldness of my cunning,[18] I will lay myself in hazard. Claudio, whom here you have warrant to execute, is no greater forfeit to the law than Angelo who hath sentenc'd him: To make you understand this in a manifested effect, I crave but four days' respite; for the which you are to do me both a present and a dangerous courtesy.

Prov. Pray, sir, in what?

Duke. In the delaying death.

Prov. Alack! how may I do it? having the hour limited, and an express command, under penalty, to deliver his head in the view of Angelo? I may make my case as Claudio's, to cross this in the smallest.

Duke. By the vow of mine order, I warrant you: if my instructions may be your guide, let this Barnardine be this morning executed, and his head borne to Angelo.

Prov. Angelo hath seen them both, and will discover the favour.

Duke. O! death's a great disguiser; and you

harmonious charmingly for *charmingly harmonious*, in The Tempest.

[18] That is, in *confidence* of my *sagacity*.

may add to it. Shave the head, and dye the beard; and say, it was the desire of the penitent to be so bar'd before his death: You know the course is common.[19] If any thing fall to you upon this more than thanks and good fortune, by the saint whom I profess, I will plead against it with my life.

Prov. Pardon me, good father: it is against my oath.

Duke. Were you sworn to the Duke, or to the deputy?

Prov. To him, and to his substitutes.

Duke. You will think you have made no offence, if the Duke avouch the justice of your dealing?

Prov. But what likelihood is in that?

Duke. Not a resemblance, but a certainty. Yet since I see you fearful; that neither my coat, integrity, nor my persuasion, can with ease attempt you, I will go further than I meant, to pluck all fears out of you. Look you, sir; here is the hand and seal of the Duke. You know the character, I doubt not; and the signet is not strange to you.

Prov. I know them both.

Duke. The contents of this is the return of the Duke: you shall anon overread it at your pleasure; where you shall find, within these two days he will be here. This is a thing that Angelo knows not; for he this very day receives letters of strange tenor; perchance, of the Duke's death; perchance, entering into some monastery; but, by chance, nothing of what is here writ. Look, the unfolding star calls up the shepherd.[20] Put not yourself into amaze-

[19] This probably alludes to a practice among Roman Catholics of desiring to receive the *tonsure* of the monks before they died.

[20] So Milton in Comus:

"The star that bids the shepherd fold
Now the top of heaven doth hold."

ment, how these things should be: all difficulties are out easy when they are known. Call your executioner, and off with Barnardine's head: I will give him a present shrift, and advise him for a better place. Yet you are amaz'd; but this shall absolutely resolve you. Come away; it is almost clear dawn. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. Another Room in the same.

Enter Clown.

Clo. I am as well acquainted here, as I was in our house of profession: one would think it were mistress Over-done's own house, for here be many of her old customers. First, here's young master Rash;[1] he's in for a commodity of brown paper and old ginger, ninescore and seventeen pounds; of which he made five marks, ready money:[2] marry, then, ginger was not much in request, for the old women were all dead. Then is there here one master Caper, at the suit of master Three-pile the mercer, for some four suits of peach-colour'd satin, which now peaches him a beggar. Then have we here young Dizzy, and young master Deep-vow, and

[1] This enumeration of the inhabitants of the prison affords a very striking view of the practices predominant in Shakespeare's age. Besides those whose follies are common to all times, we have four fighting men and a traveller. It is not unlikely that the originals of the pictures were then known. *Rash* was a silken stuff formerly worn in coats: all the names are characteristic.

[2] It was the practice of money lenders in Shakespeare's time, as well as more recently, to make advances partly in goods and partly in cash. The goods were to be resold generally at an enormous loss upon the cost price, and of these commodities it appears that *brown paper* and *ginger* often formed a part. In Green's Defence of Coney-catching, 1592: "If he borrow a hundred pound, he shall have forty in silver, and threescore in wares as lute-strings, hobby-horses, or *brown paper*."

master Copper-spur, and master Starve-lackey, the rapier and dagger man, and young Drop-heir that kill'd lusty Pudding, and master Forthright the tilter, and brave master Shoe-tie the great traveller, and wild Half-can that stabb'd Pots, and, I think, forty more; all great doers in our trade, and are now for the Lord's sake.[3]

Enter ABHORSON.

Abhor. Sirrah, bring Barnardine hither.

Clo. Master Barnardine! you must rise and be hang'd, master Barnardine.

Abhor. What, ho! Barnardine!

Barnar. [*Within.*] A pox o' your throats! Who makes that noise there? What are you?

Clo. Your friends, sir; the hangmen: You must be so good, sir, to rise and be put to death.

Barnar. [*Within.*] Away, you rogue, away! I am sleepy.

Abhor. Tell him he must awake, and that quickly too.

Clo. Pray, master Barnardine, awake till you are executed, and sleep afterwards.

Abhor. Go in to him, and fetch him out.

Clo. He is coming, sir, he is coming: I hear his straw rustle.

Enter BARNARDINE.

Abhor. Is the axe upon the block, sirrah?

[3] It appears from an ancient Epigram, that this was the language in which prisoners who were confined for debt addressed passengers: "Good gentle writers, *for the Lord's sake, for the Lord's sake*, like *Ludgate prisoners*, lo, I, begging, make my mone." And in Nashe's Peirce Pennilesse, 1593: "At that time that thy joys were in the *fleeting*, and thus crying *for the Lord's sake* out of an iron window."

Clo. Very ready, sir.

Barnar. How now, Abhorson? what's the news with you?

Abhor. Truly, sir, I would desire you to clap into your prayers; for, look you, the warrant's come.

Barnar. You rogue, I have been drinking all night; I am not fitted for't.

Clo. O! the better, sir; for he that drinks all night, and is hanged betimes in the morning, may sleep the sounder all the next day.

Enter DUKE.

Abhor. Look you, sir; here comes your ghostly father: Do we jest now, think you?

Duke. Sir, induced by my charity, and hearing how hastily you are to depart, I am come to advise you, comfort you, and pray with you.

Barnar. Friar, not I: I have been drinking hard all night, and I will have more time to prepare me, or they shall beat out my brains with billets: I will not consent to die this day, that's certain.

Duke. O! sir, you must: and therefore, I beseech you,
Look forward on the journey you shall go.

Barnar. I swear I will not die to-day for any man's persuasion.

Duke. But hear you,—

Barnar. Not a word: if you have any thing to say to me, come to my ward; for thence will not I to-day. [*Exit.*

Enter Provost.

Duke Unfit to live, or die: O, gravel heart!—
After him, fellows: bring him to the block.

[*Exeunt* ABHORSON *and Clown*

Prov. Now, sir, how do you find the prisoner?

Duke. A creature unprepar'd, unmeet for death;
And, to transport[4] him in the mind he is,
Were damnable.

Prov. Here in the prison, father,
There died this morning of a cruel fever
One Ragozine, a most notorious pirate,
A man of Claudio's years; his beard and head
Just of his colour: What if we do omit
This reprobate, till he were well inclin'd,
And satisfy the deputy with the visage
Of Ragozine, more like to Claudio?

Duke. O, 'tis an accident that Heaven provides!
Despatch it presently: the hour draws on
Prefix'd by Angelo. See this be done,
And sent according to command; whiles I
Persuade this rude wretch willingly to die.

Prov. This shall be done, good father, presently.
But Barnardine must die this afternoon:
And how shall we continue Claudio,
To save me from the danger that might come,
If he were known alive?

Duke. Let this be done:—
Put them in secret holds, both Barnardine and Claudio:
Ere twice the sun hath made his journal greeting
To yonder generation,[5] you shall find
Your safety manifested.

[4] That is, to remove him from one world to another. The French *trépas* affords a kindred sense.

[5] That is, to the people without the walls of the prison; the sun never visiting those within. The usual reading is, *the under generation*, meaning the antipodes; a change first proposed by Hanmer, and approved by Johnson, but which, besides having no authority from the original, not a little mars the harmony of the text. For the scene takes place, and the pledge is given to the jailer, in the prison before dawn: Claudio is to be executed by four o'clock

Prov. I am your free dependant.

Duke. Quick, despatch, and send the head to Angelo. [*Exit Provost.*

Now will I write letters to Angelo,—
The provost, he shall bear them,—whose contents
Shall witness to him, I am near at home;
And that, by great injunctions, I am bound
To enter publicly: him I'll desire
To meet me at the consecrated fount,
A league below the city; and from thence,
By cold gradation and well-balanc'd[6] form,
We shall proceed with Angelo.

Re-enter Provost.

Prov. Here is the head: I'll carry it myself.

Duke. Convenient is it: Make a swift return;
For I would commune with you of such things,
That want no ear but yours.

Prov. I'll make all speed. [*Exit.*

Isab. [*Within.*] Peace, ho, be here!

Duke. The tongue of Isabel:—She's come to know,

that morning, and his head sent to Angelo by five. On the *next* morning the Duke is to arrive, and his coming is to *manifest* the jailer's safety. This manifestation the jailer is to have before the sun hath twice made his daily greeting to the city: accordingly, on the morning of his arrival, the Duke says to Friar Peter, "The Provost knows our purpose and our plot;" which knowledge he must have received before sunrise that day, the Duke having had no communication with him since. It is hardly needful to add, that the sun would not have risen twice to the antipodes till the *evening after* the Duke's arrival; and his object is to make the time as short as he can, for the better satisfying of the Provost. H.

[6] The original has "*weal-balanc'd* form;" which may indeed possibly be right, referring to the state—*balanc'd* for the public *weal;* but this sense is so far-fetched and improbable, that we can scarce think it the Poet's H

If yet her brother's pardon be come hither:
But I will keep her ignorant of her good,
To make her heavenly comforts of despair,
When it is least expected.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isab. Ho! by your leave.

Duke. Good morning to you, fair and gracious daughter.

Isab. The better, given me by so holy a man.
Hath yet the deputy sent my brother's pardon?

Duke. He hath releas'd him, Isabel, from the world:
His head is off, and sent to Angelo.

Isab. Nay, but it is not so.

Duke. It is no other.
Show your wisdom, daughter, in your close patience.

Isab. O, I will to him, and pluck out his eyes!

Duke. You shall not be admitted to his sight.

Isab. Unhappy Claudio! Wretched Isabel!
Injurious world! Most damned Angelo!

Duke. This nor hurts him, nor profits you a jot:
Forbear it, therefore; give your cause to Heaven.
Mark what I say, which you shall find
By every syllable a faithful verity:—
The Duke comes home to-morrow;—nay, dry your eyes:
One of our convent, and his confessor,
Gives me this instance: Already he hath carried
Notice to Escalus and Angelo;
Who do prepare to meet him at the gates,
There to give up their power. If you can, pace your wisdom
In that good path that I would wish it go;

And you shall have your bosom [7] on this wretch,
Grace of the Duke, revenges to your heart,
And general honour.

Isab. I am directed by you.

Duke. This letter, then, to friar Peter give;
'Tis that he sent me of the Duke's return:
Say, by this token, I desire his company
At Mariana's house to-night. Her cause, and yours,
I'll perfect him withal; and he shall bring you
Before the Duke; and to the head of Angelo
Accuse him home, and home. For my poor self,
I am combined [8] by a sacred vow,
And shall be absent. Wend [9] you with this letter:
Command these fretting waters from your eyes
With a light heart: trust not my holy order,
If I pervert your course. — Who's here?

Enter LUCIO.

Lucio. Good even, friar: where is the provost?

Duke. Not within, sir.

Lucio. O! pretty Isabella, I am pale at mine heart, to see thine eyes so red: thou must be patient. I am fain to dine and sup with water and bran; I dare not for my head fill my belly: one fruitful meal would set me to't: But they say the Duke will be here to-morrow. By my troth, Isabel, I lov'd thy brother: if the old fantastical Duke of dark corners had been at home, he had lived.

[*Exit* ISABELLA.

Duke. Sir, the Duke is marvellous little beholden

[7] Your *bosom* is your heart's desire, your wish.

[8] Shakespeare uses *combine* for *to bind by a pact or agreement* so he calls Angelo the *combinate* husband of Mariana

[9] That is, go

to your reports; but the best is, he lives not in them.[10]

Lucio. Friar, thou knowest not the Duke so well as I do: he's a better woodman [11] than thou takest him for.

Duke. Well, you'll answer this one day. Fare ye well.

Lucio. Nay, tarry; I'll go along with thee: I can tell thee pretty tales of the Duke.

Duke. You have told me too many of him already, sir, if they be true; if not true, none were enough.

Lucio. I was once before him for getting a wench with child.

Duke. Did you such a thing?

Lucio. Yes, marry, did I; but was fain to forswear it: they would else have married me to the rotten medlar.

Duke. Sir, your company is fairer than honest: Rest you well.

Lucio. By my troth, I'll go with thee to the lane's end: If bawdy talk offend you, we'll have very little of it: Nay, friar, I am a kind of bur; I shall stick. [*Exeunt.*

[10] That is, he depends not on them.

[11] A *woodman* was an attendant on the forester; his great employment was hunting. It is here used in a wanton sense for a hunter of a different sort of game. So, Falstaff asks his mistresses in The Merry Wives of Windsor: "Am I a woodman? Ha!" This use of the word may have sprung from the consonance of *deer* and *dear;* as in Beaumont and Fletcher's play, The Chances Act i. sc. 8:

"Well, well, son John,
I see you are a *woodman,* and can choose
Your *deer,* though it be i'the dark."

SCENE IV. A Room in Angelo's House.

Enter Angelo *and* Escalus.

Escal. Every letter he hath writ hath disvouch'd[1] other.

Ang. In most uneven and distracted manner. His actions show much like to madness: pray Heaven his wisdom be not tainted! And why meet him at the gates, and re-deliver our authorities there?

Escal. I guess not.

Ang. And why should we proclaim it in an hour before his entering, that, if any crave redress of injustice, they should exhibit their petitions in the street?

Escal. He shows his reason for that: to have a despatch of complaints; and to deliver us from devices hereafter, which shall then have no power to stand against us.

Ang. Well, I beseech you, let it be proclaim'd:
Betimes i'the morn I'll call you at your house.
Give notice to such men of sort and suit,[2]
As are to meet him.

Escal. I shall, sir: fare you well. [*Exit*

Ang. Good night.—
This deed unshapes me quite, makes me unpregnant,[3]
And dull to all proceedings. A deflowered maid!
And by an eminent body, that enforc'd
The law against it!—But that her tender shame
Will not proclaim against her maiden loss,
How might she tongue me! Yet reason dares her no;[4]

[1] *Disvouch'd* is contradicted. [2] Figure and rank.

[3] Unready, unprepared; the contrary to *pregnant* in its sense of ready, apprehensive.

[4] This is commonly printed thus: "Yet reason dares her?

For my authority here's of a credent [5] bulk,
That no particular [6] scandal once can touch,
But it confounds the breather.[7] He should have liv'd,
Save that his riotous youth, with dangerous sense,
Might, in the times to come, have ta'en revenge,
By so receiving a dishonour'd life,
With ransom of such shame. 'Would yet he had liv'd!
Alack! when once our grace we have forgot,
Nothing goes right: we would, and we would not.

[*Exit.*

no: for my authority," &c.; in which case *dares* has the sense of *prompt, challenge*, or *call forth*, as in 1 Henry IV. Act v. sc. 2:

> "Unless a brother should a brother *dare*
> To gentle exercise and proof of arms."

"Does reason move her to expose me? — No; the drawings of reason are all the other way;" which certainly yields an apt and clear meaning enough. Yet we give the passage as it stands in the original. Nor is the sense much less clear and apt as there printed. For *dare*, used transitively, may well have, and often has, the effect to keep or dissuade one from doing a thing; as if one should say, — "I *dared* him to strike me, and he *durst* not do it." So, in the text as we give it, the sense plainly is, — "Yet reason bids her *not* expose me;" the effect of that bidding being expressed by *no;* reason *threatens* and *overawes* her, so that she *dare not* do it. Thus, in Beaumont and Fletcher's play, The Chances, Act iii. sc. 4:

> "His sister that you nam'd 'tis true I have long lov'd,
> As true. I have enjoy'd her; no less truth,
> I have a child by her: but that she, or he,
> Or any of that family, are tainted,
> Suffer disgrace, or ruin, by my pleasures,
> I wear a sword to satisfy the world *no*."

That is, to satisfy the world that *'tis not so*. So, also, in A Wife for a Month, by the same authors: "I'm sure he did not, for I charg'd him *no;*" that is, charged him *not to do it*. But indeed this use of *no* is not uncommon in the old writers. — The *of* after *bears*, in the next line, seems to have a partitive sense: "For my authority *carries so much of weight*," &c.

[5] *Credent*, creditable, not questionable.

[6] *Particular* is *private;* a French sense of the word.

[7] That is, utterer.

SCENE V. Fields without the Town

Enter DUKE *in his own habit, and Friar* PETER.

Duke. These letters at fit time deliver me.
[*Giving letters.*
The provost knows our purpose, and our plot.
The matter being afoot, keep your instruction,
And hold you ever to our special drift;
Though sometimes you do blench [1] from this to that,
As cause doth minister. Go, call at Flavius' house,
And tell him where I stay: give the like notice
To Valentinus, Rowland, and to Crassus,
And bid them bring the trumpets to the gate;
But send me Flavius first.

F. Peter. It shall be speeded well. [*Exit Friar.*

Enter VARRIUS.

Duke. I thank thee, Varrius; thou hast made good haste:
Come, we will walk: There's other of our friends
Will greet us here anon, my gentle Varrius.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. Street near the City Gate.

Enter ISABELLA *and* MARIANA.

Isab. To speak so indirectly, I am loth:
I would say the truth; but to accuse him so,
That is your part: Yet I'm advis'd to do it;
He says, to vailful purpose.

Mari. Be rul'd by him.

Isab. Besides, he tells me, that, if peradventure

[1] To *blench*, to start off, to fly off.

He speak against me on the adverse side,
I should not think it strange; for 'tis a physic,
That's bitter to sweet end.

Mari. I would, friar Peter—

Isab. O, peace! the friar is come.

Enter Friar PETER.

F. Peter. Come; I have found you out a stand most fit,
Where you may have such vantage on the Duke,
He shall not pass you. Twice have the trumpets sounded:
The generous [2] and gravest citizens
Have hent [3] the gates, and very near upon
The Duke is entering: therefore hence, away.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. A public Place near the City Gate.

MARIANA *veiled*, ISABELLA, *and* PETER, *at a distance. Enter, at opposite doors*, DUKE, VARRIUS, *Lords;* ANGELO, ESCALUS, LUCIO, *Provost, Officers, and Citizens.*

Duke. My very worthy cousin, fairly met:—
Our old and faithful friend, we are glad to see you.

Ang. and Escal. Happy return be to your royal grace!

Duke. Many and hearty thankings to you both.

[2] *Generous*, for most noble, or those of rank; *generosi*, Lat.

[3] That is, seized, laid hold on: from the Anglo-Saxon.

We have made inquiry of you; and we hear
Such goodness of your justice, that our soul
Cannot but yield forth to you public thanks,
Forerunning more requital.

Ang. You make my bonds still greater.

Duke. O! your desert speaks loud; and I should wrong it,
To lock it in the wards of covert bosom,
When it deserves with characters of brass
A forted residence, 'gainst the tooth of time,
And razure of oblivion: Give me your hand,
And let the subject see, to make them know
That outward courtesies would fain proclaim
Favours that keep within. — Come, Escalus;
You must walk by us on our other hand; —
And good supporters are you.

Friar PETER *and* ISABELLA *come forward*

F. Peter. Now is your time: Speak loud, and kneel before him.

Isab. Justice, O royal Duke! Vail[1] your regard
Upon a wrong'd, I would fain have said, a maid!
O worthy prince! dishonour not your eye
By throwing it on any other object,
Till you have heard me in my true complaint,
And given me, justice, justice, justice, justice!

Duke. Relate your wrongs: In what? By whom? Be brief:
Here is lord Angelo shall give you justice:
Reveal yourself to him.

Isab. O! worthy Duke,
You bid me seek redemption of the devil:
Hear me yourself; for that which I must speak

[1] To *vail* is to lower to *let fall*, to cast down.

Must either punish me, not being believ'd,
Or wring redress from you: Hear me, O, hear me, here!

Ang. My lord, her wits, I fear me, are not firm:
She hath been a suitor to me for her brother,
Cut off by course of justice.

Isab. By course of justice!

Ang. And she will speak most bitterly, and strange.

Isab. Most strange, but yet most truly, will I speak.
That Angelo's forsworn; is it not strange?
That Angelo's a murderer; is't not strange?
That Angelo is an adulterous thief,
An hypocrite, a virgin-violator;
Is it not strange, and strange?

Duke. Nay, it is ten times strange.

Isab. It is not truer he is Angelo,
Than this is all as true as it is strange:
Nay, it is ten times true; for truth is truth
To the end of reckoning.

Duke. Away with her:—Poor soul!
She speaks this in the infirmity of sense.

Isab. O prince! I conjure thee, as thou believ'st
There is another comfort than this world,
That thou neglect me not, with that opinion
That I am touch'd with madness: make not impossible
That which but seems unlike: 'Tis not impossible
But one, the wicked'st caitiff on the ground,
May seem as shy, as grave, as just, as absolute,
As Angelo; even so may Angelo,
In all his dressings,[2] characts,[3] titles, forms,

[2] That is, habiliments of office.

[3] *Characts* are *distinctive marks* or characters. A statute of Edward VI. directs the seals of office of every bishop to have "certain *characts* under the king's arms for the knowledge of the diocese."

Be an arch-villain: Believe it, royal prince,
If he be less, he's nothing; but he's more,
Had I more name for badness.

Duke. By mine honesty,
If she be mad, as I believe no other,
Her madness hath the oddest frame of sense,
Such a dependency of thing on thing,
As e'er I heard in madness.

Isab. O, gracious Duke!
Harp not on that; nor do not banish reason
For inequality:[4] but let your reason serve
To make the truth appear, where it seems hid
And hide the false seems — true.

Duke. Many that are not mad
Have, sure, more lack of reason. — What would you say?

Isab. I am the sister of one Claudio,
Condemn'd upon the act of fornication
To lose his head; condemn'd by Angelo.
I, in probation of a sisterhood,
Was sent to by my brother: One Lucio
As then the messenger; —

Lucio. That's I, an't like your grace:
I came to her from Claudio, and desir'd her
To try her gracious fortune with Lord Angelo,
For her poor brother's pardon.

Isab. That's he, indeed.

Duke. You were not bid to speak.

Lucio. No, my good lord;
Nor wish'd to hold my peace.

Duke. I wish you now then:
Pray you, take note of it; and when you have

[4] The meaning appears to be, — "Do not suppose me mad because I speak inconsistently or *unequally*."

[5] That is, — Let your reason serve to discover the truth, where it lies hid, and to refute the false, where it seems true.

A business for yourself, pray Heaven you then
Be perfect.

Lucio. I warrant your honour.

Duke. The warrant's for yourself: take heed to it.

Isab. This gentleman told somewhat of my tale.

Lucio. Right.

Duke. It may be right; but you are in the wrong
To speak before your time. — Proceed.

Isab. I went
To this pernicious caitiff deputy.

Duke. That's somewhat madly spoken.

Isab. Pardon it;
The phrase is to the matter.[6]

Duke. Mended again: the matter? — Proceed.

Isab. In brief, — to set the needless process by,
How I persuaded, how I pray'd, and kneel'd,
How he refell'd[7] me, and how I replied;
(For this was of much length) — the vile conclusion
I now begin with grief and shame to utter:
He would not, but by gift of my chaste body
To his concupiscible intemperate lust,
Release my brother; and, after much debatement,
My sisterly remorse[8] confutes mine honour,
And I did yield to him. But the next morn betimes,
His purpose surfeiting, he sends a warrant
For my poor brother's head.

Duke. This is most likely!

Isab. O, that it were as like as it is true!

Duke. By Heaven, fond wretch! thou know'st not what thou speak'st;
Or else thou art suborn'd against his honour,

[6] That is, *suited* to the matter; as in Hamlet: "The phrase would be more german to the matter."

[7] *Refell'd* is refuted.

[8] *Remorse* is pity.

In hateful practice.[9] First, his integrity
Stands without blemish: — next, it imports no reason,
That with such vehemency he should pursue
Faults proper to himself: if he had so offended,
He would have weigh'd thy brother by himself,
And not have cut him off: Some one hath set you on:
Confess the truth, and say by whose advice
Thou cam'st here to complain.

Isab. And is this all?
Then, O! you blessed ministers above,
Keep me in patience; and, with ripen'd time,
Unfold the evil which is here wrapt up
In countenance![10] — Heaven shield your grace from woe,
As I, thus wrong'd, hence unbelieved go!

Duke. I know, you'd fain be gone: — An officer!
To prison with her! — Shall we thus permit
A blasting and a scandalous breath to fall
On him so near us? This needs must be a practice.
Who knew of your intent, and coming hither?

Isab. One that I would were here; friar Lodowick.

Duke. A ghostly father, belike: — Who knows that Lodowick?

Lucio. My lord, I know him: 'tis a meddling friar;
I do not like the man: had he been lay,[11] my lord,
For certain words he spake against your grace
In your retirement, I had swing'd him soundly

Duke. Words against me? This a good friar belike!

[9] *Practice* was used by the old writers for any *insidious stratagem or treachery.*

[10] That is, false appearance.

[11] That is, of the *laity*, a layman.

And to set on this wretched woman here
Against our substitute! — Let this friar be found.

Lucio. But yesternight, my lord, she and that friar
I saw them at the prison: a saucy friar,
A very scurvy fellow.

F. Peter. Blessed be your royal grace!
I have stood by, my lord, and I have heard
Your royal ear abus'd. First, hath this woman
Most wrongfully accus'd your substitute;
Who is as free from touch or soil with her,
As she from one ungot.

Duke. We did believe no less.
Know you that friar Lodowick that she speaks of?

F. Peter. I know him for a man divine and holy;
Not scurvy nor a temporary meddler,[12]
As he's reported by this gentleman:
And, on my trust, a man that never yet
Did, as he vouches, misreport your grace.

Lucio. My lord, most villanously; believe it.

F. Peter. Well, he in time may come to clear himself;
But at this instant he is sick, my lord,
Of a strange fever: Upon his mere request,
(Being come to knowledge that there was complaint
Intended 'gainst lord Angelo,) came I hither
To speak, as from his mouth, what he doth know
Is true, and false; and what he with his oath,
And all probation, will make up full clear,
Whensoever he's convented.[13] First, for this woman;
(To justify this worthy nobleman,
So vulgarly[14] and personally accus'd;)

[12] That is, a minder of other men's business; an intermeddler in matters that do not belong to him. *Temporary* means *time serving*. H.

[13] *Convented*, cited, summoned.

[14] That s, publicly

Her shall you hear disproved to her eyes,
Till she herself confess it.

Duke. Good friar, let's hear it.

[ISABELLA *is carried off, guarded; and* MARIANA *comes forward.*

Do you not smile at this, lord Angelo? —
O Heaven, the vanity of wretched fools! —
Give us some seats. — Come, cousin Angelo;
In this I'll be impartial:[15] be you judge
Of your own cause. — Is this the witness, friar?
First, let her show her face; and, after, speak.

Mari. Pardon, my lord: I will not show my face
Until my husband bid me.

Duke. What, are you married?

Mari. No, my lord.

Duke. Are you a maid?

Mari. No, my lord.

Duke. A widow then?

Mari. Neither, my lord.

Duke. Why, you are nothing then: — Neither maid, widow, nor wife?

Lucio. My lord, she may be a punk; for many of them are neither maid, widow, nor wife.

Duke. Silence that fellow: I would he had some cause to prattle for himself.

Lucio. Well, my lord.

Mari. My lord, I do confess I ne'er was married;
And I confess, besides, I am no maid:
I have known my husband; yet my husband knows not
That ever he knew me

Lucio. He was drunk then, my lord: it can be no better.

[15] That is, I'll take *no part* in this; as appears from his saying to Angelo, — "Be you judge of your own cause."

Duke. For the benefit of silence, 'would thou wert so too.

Lucio. Well, my lord.

Duke. This is no witness for lord Angelo.

Mari. Now I come to't, my lord:
She, that accuses him of fornication,
In selfsame manner doth accuse my husband;
And charges him, my lord, with such a time,
When I'll depose I had him in mine arms,
With all the effect of love.

Ang. Charges she more than me?

Mari. Not that I know.

Duke. No? you say, your husband.

Mari. Why, just, my lord, and that is Angelo,
Who thinks he knows, that he ne'er knew my body,
But knows he thinks, that he knew Isabel's.

Ang. This is a strange abuse:[16]—Let's see thy face.

Mari. My husband bids me: now I will unmask. [*Unveiling.*
This is that face, thou cruel Angelo,
Which once, thou swor'st, was worth the looking on:
This is the hand, which, with a vow'd contract,
Was fast belock'd in thine: this is the body
That took away the match from Isabel,
And did supply thee at thy garden-house,[17]
In her imagin'd person.

Duke. Know you this woman?

[16] *Abuse* stands in this place for *deception* or *puzzle*. So in Macbeth: "My strange and self *abuse;*" meaning this *strange deception* of myself.

[17] *Garden-houses* were formerly much in fashion, and often used as places of clandestine meeting and intrigue. They were chiefly such buildings as we should now call *summer-houses*, standing in a walled or enclosed garden in the suburbs of London.

Lucio. Carnally, she says.

Duke. Sirrah, no more!

Lucio. Enough, my lord.

Ang. My lord, I must confess I know this woman;
And, five years since, there was some speech of marriage
Betwixt myself and her; which was broke off,
Partly, for that her promis'd proportions
Came short of composition;[18] but, in chief,
For that her reputation was disvalued
In levity: since which time of five years
I never spake with her, saw her, nor heard from her,
Upon my faith and honour.

Mari. Noble prince,
As there comes light from heaven, and words from breath;
As there is sense in truth, and truth in virtue,
I am affianc'd this man's wife, as strongly
As words could make up vows: and, my good lord,
But Tuesday night last gone, in his garden-house,
He knew me as a wife: As this is true
Let me in safety raise me from my knees;
Or else for ever be confixed here,
A marble monument!

Ang. I did but smile till now.
Now, good my lord, give me the scope of justice;
My patience here is touch'd: I do perceive,
These poor informal[19] women are no more
But instruments of some more mightier member

[18] Her fortune, which was promised *proportionate* to mine, fell short of what was *compounded*, contracted for.

[19] *Informal* signifies *out of their senses*. So, in The Comedy of Errors, Act v. sc. 1: "To make of him a *formal* man again." The speaker had just before said that she would keep Antipholus of Syracuse, who is behaving like a madman, till she had brought him to his right wits again. See also Twelfth Night Act ii sc. 5, and note 11.

That sets them on: Let me have way, my lord,
To find this practice out.

Duke. Ay, with my heart;
And punish them unto your height of pleasure.—
Thou foolish friar, and thou pernicious woman,
Compact with her that's gone, think'st thou, thy oaths,
Though they would swear down each particular saint,
Were testimonies against his worth and credit,
That's seal'd in approbation?[20] — You, lord Escalus,
Sit with my cousin: lend him your kind pains
To find out this abuse, whence 'tis deriv'd.—
There is another friar that set them on;
Let him be sent for.

F. Peter. Would he were here, my lord; for he, indeed,
Hath set the women on to this complaint:
Your provost knows the place where he abides,
And he may fetch him.

Duke. Go, do it instantly.— [*Exit Provost.*
And you, my noble and well-warranted cousin,
Whom it concerns to hear this matter forth,[21]
Do with your injuries as seems you best,
In any chastisement: I for a while
Will leave you; but stir not you, till you have well
Determin'd upon these slanderers.

Escal. My lord, we'll do it throughly.—[*Exit* DUKE.] Signior Lucio, did not you say you knew that friar Lodowick to be a dishonest person?

Lucio. Cucullus non facit monachum:[22] honest in nothing, but in his clothes; and one that hath spoke most villanous speeches of the Duke.

[20] *Stamped* or *sealed*, as tried and *approved*.

[21] That is, out, to the end.

[22] "The cowl does not make a monk." It occurs again in Twelfth Night, Act i. sc. 5. H.

Escal. We shall entreat you to abide here till he come, and enforce them against him: We shall find this friar a notable fellow.

Lucio As any in Vienna, on my word.

Escal [*To an Attendant.*] Call that same Isabel here once again: I would speak with her. Pray you, my lord, give me leave to question: you shall see how I'll handle her.

Lucio. Not better than he, by her own report.

Escal. Say you?

Lucio. Marry, sir, I think, if you handled her privately, she would sooner confess: perchance, publicly, she'll be asham'd.

Re-enter Officers, with ISABELLA, *the* DUKE *in the Friar's habit, and Provost.*

Escal. I will go darkly to work with her.

Lucio. That's the way; for women are light[23] at midnight.

Escal. [*To* ISAB.] Come on, mistress: here's a gentlewoman denies all that you have said.

Lucio. My lord, here comes the rascal I spoke of; here, with the provost.

Escal. In very good time: — speak not you to him, till we call upon you.

Lucio. Mum.

Escal. Come, sir: Did you set these women on to slander lord Angelo? they have confess'd you did.

Duke. 'Tis false.

Escal. How! know you where you are?

Duke. Respect to your great place! and let the devil

[23] This is one of the words on which Shakespeare delights to quibble. Thus Portia, in The Merchant of Venice: "Let me give *light*, but let me not be *light*."

Be sometime honour'd for his burning throne: —
Where is the Duke? 'tis he should hear me speak.

Escal. The Duke's in us; and he will hear you speak:
Look, you speak justly.

Duke. Boldly, at least: — But, O, poor souls!
Come you to seek the lamb here of the fox?
Good night to your redress. Is the Duke gone?
Then is your cause gone too. The Duke's unjust,
Thus to retort[24] your manifest appeal,
And put your trial in the villain's mouth,
Which here you come to accuse.

Lucio. This is the rascal: this is he I spoke of.

Escal. Why, thou unreverend and unhallow'd friar!
Is't not enough, thou hast suborn'd these women
To accuse this worthy man; but, in foul mouth,
And in the witness of his proper ear,
To call him villain? And then to glance from him
To the Duke himself, to tax him with injustice?
Take him hence; to the rack with him: We'll touse you
Joint by joint, — but we will know his purpose: —
What! unjust?

Duke. Be not so hot; the Duke dare
No more stretch this finger of mine, than he
Dare rack his own: his subject am I not,
Nor here provincial:[25] My business in this state
Made me a looker-on here in Vienna,
Where I have seen corruption boil and bubble,
Till it o'errun the stew: laws for all faults;

[24] To *retort* is to refer back.

[25] *Provincial* is pertaining to a province; most usually taken for the circuit of an ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The chief or head of any religious order in such a province was called the provincial, to whom alone the members of that order were accountable.

But faults so countenanc'd, that the strong statutes
Stand like the forfeits in a barber's shop,
As much in mock as mark.[26]

Escal. Slander to the state! Away with him to prison.

Ang. What can you vouch against him, signior Lucio?
Is this the man that you did tell us of?

Lucio. 'Tis he, my lord. Come hither, goodman bald-pate: Do you know me?

Duke. I remember you, sir, by the sound of your voice: I met you at the prison in the absence of the Duke?

Lucio. O! did you so? And do you remember what you said of the Duke?

Duke. Most notedly, sir.

Lucio. Do you so, sir? And was the Duke a flesh-monger, a fool, and a coward, as you then reported him to be?

Duke. You must, sir, change persons with me, ere you make that my report: you, indeed, spoke so of him; and much more, much worse.

Lucio. O, thou damnable fellow! Did not I pluck thee by the nose for thy speeches?

Duke. I protest, I love the Duke, as I love myself.

Ang. Hark! how the villain would gloss now after his treasonable abuses.

Escal. Such a fellow is not to be talk'd withal:

[26] Barbers' shops were anciently places of great resort for passing away time in an idle manner. By way of enforcing some kind of regularity, and perhaps as much to promote drinking, certain laws were usually hung up, the transgression of which was to be punished by specific *forfeits;* which were *as much in mock as mark*, because the barber had no authority of himself to enforce them, and also because they were of a ludicrous nature.

— Away with him to prison: — Where is the provost? — Away with him to prison: Lay bolts enough upon him: — Let him speak no more. — Away with those giglots [27] too, and with the other confederate companion. [*The Provost lays hands on the* DUKE.

Duke. Stay, sir; stay a while.

Ang. What! resists he? Help him, Lucio.

Lucio. Come, sir; come, sir; come, sir; foh! sir: Why, you bald-pated, lying rascal! you must be hooded, must you? Show your knave's visage, with a pox to you! show your sheep-biting face, and be hang'd an hour! [28] Will't not off? [*Pulls off the Friar's hood, and discovers the* DUKE.

Duke. Thou art the first knave that e'er made a duke. —

First, provost, let me bail these gentle three: —

[*To* LUCIO.] Sneak not away, sir; for the friar and you

Must have a word anon: — Lay hold on him.

Lucio. This may prove worse than hanging.

Duke. [*To* ESCALUS.] What you have spoke, I pardon; sit you down.

We'll borrow place of him: — [*To* ANGELO.] Sir, by your leave: —

Hast thou or word, or wit, or impudence,

That yet can do thee office? [29] If thou hast,

Rely upon it till my tale be heard,

And hold no longer out.

[27] *Giglots* are wantons. So, in 1 Henry VI., Act iv. sc. 7 "Young Talbot was not born to be the pillage of a *giglot* wench."

[28] "What, Piper ho! be *hang'd awhile*," is a line in an old madrigal. And in Ben Jonson's Bartholomew Fair, we have, — "Leave the bottle behind you, and be *curst awhile*." That is, be *hang'd*, be *curst; awhile* being, like *an hour* in the text, merely a vulgar expletive. H.

[29] That is, do thee *service*.

Ang. O, my dread lord!
I should be guiltier than my guiltiness,
To think I can be undiscernible,
When I perceive your grace, like power divine,
Hath look'd upon my passes:[30] Then, good prince,
No longer session hold upon my shame,
But let my trial be mine own confession:
Immediate sentence then, and sequent death,
Is all the grace I beg.

Duke. Come hither, Mariana:—
Say, wast thou e'er contracted to this woman?

Ang. I was, my lord.

Duke. Go take her hence, and marry her instantly.—
Do you the office, friar; which consummate,
Return him here again:—Go with him, provost.

[*Exeunt* ANGELO, MARIANA, PETER, *and Provost.*

Escal. My lord, I am more amaz'd at his dishonour,
Than at the strangeness of it.

Duke. Come hither, Isabel:
Your friar is now your prince: As I was then
Advértising and holy[31] to your business,
Not changing heart with habit, I am still
Attorney'd at your service.

Isab. O, give me pardon,
That I, your vassal, have employ'd and pain'd
Your unknown sovereignty!

Duke. You are pardon'd, Isabel:
And now, dear maid, be you as free[32] to us.

[30] *Passes* probably put for *trespasses;* or it may mean *courses,* from *passées,* Fr. *Les passées d'un cerf* is the track or passages of a stag, his *courses.*

[31] *Advértising and holy,* attentive and faithful.

[32] That is, *generous;*—pardon us as we have pardoned you

Your brother's death, I know, sits at your heart;
And you may marvel why I obscur'd myself,
Labouring to save his life; and would not rather
Make rash remonstrance [33] of my hidden power,
Than let him so be lost: O, most kind maid!
It was the swift celerity of his death,
Which I did think with slower foot came on,
That brain'd my purpose: [34] But, peace be with him
That life is better life, past fearing death,
Than that which lives to fear: make it your comfort,
So happy is your brother.

Re-enter ANGELO, MARIANA, *Friar* PETER, *and Provost.*

Isab. I do, my lord.

Duke. For this new-married man, approaching here,
Whose salt imagination yet hath wrong'd
Your well-defended honour, you must pardon
For Mariana's sake: But as he adjudg'd your brother,
(Being criminal, in double violation
Of sacred chastity, and of promise-breach,[35]
Thereon dependent for your brother's life,)
The very mercy of the law cries out
Most audible, even from his proper [36] tongue,
"An Angelo for Claudio, death for death!"
Haste still pays haste, and leisure answers leisure

[33] *Rash remonstrance;* that is, "a premature *display*" of it. Perhaps we should read *de*monstrance; but the word may be formed from *remonstrer*, French, *to show again.*

[34] *That brain'd my purpose.* We still use in conversation a like phrase: "that knocked my design on the head."

[35] *Promise-breach.* It should be *promise; breach* is superfluous.

[36] Angelo's own tongue.

Like doth quit like, and Measure still for Measure.[37]
Then, Angelo, thy fault's thus manifested;
Which, though thou wouldst deny, denies thee vantage:[38]
We do condemn thee to the very block
Where Claudio stoop'd to death, and with like haste: —
Away with him.

Mari. O, my most gracious lord!
I hope you will not mock me with a husband

Duke. It is your husband mock'd you with a husband:
Consenting to the safeguard of your honour,
I thought your marriage fit; else imputation,
For that he knew you, might reproach your life,
And choke your good to come: For his possessions,
Although by confiscation they are ours,
We do instate and widow you withal,
To buy you a better husband.

Mari. O, my dear lord!
I crave no other, nor no better man.

Duke. Never crave him: we are definitive.

Mari. Gentle my liege, — [*Kneeling.*

Duke. You do but lose your labor:
Away with him to death. — [*To* LUCIO.] Now, sir, to you.

Mari. O, my good lord! — Sweet Isabel, take my part:
Lend me your knees, and all my life to come
I'll lend you; all my life to do you service.

[37] *Measure* still *for measure.* This appears to have been a current expression for retributive justice. So, in 3 Henry VI. Act. ii. sc. 6: "*Measure for measure* must be answered." Perhaps the proverb grew from the Scripture, — "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." H.

[38] That is, "To deny which will avail thee nothing."

Duke. Against all sense [39] you do impórtune her
Should she kneel down in mercy of this fact,[40]
Her brother's ghost his paved bed would break,
And take her hence in horror.

Mari. Isabel,
Sweet Isabel, do yet but kneel by me
Hold up your hands, say nothing, I'll speak all.
They say best men are moulded out of faults; [41]
And, for the most, become much more the better
For being a little bad: so may my husband.
O, Isabel! will you not lend a knee?

Duke. He dies for Claudio's death.

Isab. [*Kneeling.*] Most bounteous sir,
Look, if it please you, on this man condemn'd,
As if my brother liv'd: I partly think
A due sincerity govern'd his deeds,
Till he did look on me: since it is so,
Let him not die: My brother had but justice,
In that he did the thing for which he died:
For Angelo,
His act did not o'ertake his bad intent;
And must be buried but as an intent
That perish'd by the way: [42] thoughts are no subjects;
Intents but merely thoughts.

Mari. Merely, my lord.

Duke. Your suit's unprofitable: stand up, I say.—

[39] That is, against *reason* and *affection.*

[40] That is, to beg for mercy on this act. H.

[41] On the principle that Nature or Providence often uses our vices to scourge down our pride; as in All 's Well that Ends Well, Act iv. sc. 3: "Our virtues would be proud, if our faults whipp'd them not." H.

[42] That is, like the traveller, who dies on his journey, is obscurely interred, and thought of no more:

"Illum expirantem ——
Obliti ignoto camporum in pulvere linquunt."

I have bethought me of another fault: —
Provost, how came it Claudio was beheaded
At an unusual hour?

Prov. It was commanded so.

Duke. Had you a special warrant for the deed?

Prov. No, my good lord: it was by private message.

Duke. For which I do discharge you of your office:
Give up your keys.

Prov. Pardon me, noble lord:
I thought it was a fault, but knew it not;
Yet did repent me, after more advice:
For testimony whereof, one in the prison,
That should by private order else have died,
I have reserv'd alive.

Duke. What's he?

Prov. His name is Barnardine.

Duke. I would thou hadst done so by Claudio. —
Go, fetch him hither: let me look upon him.

[*Exit Provost.*

Escal. I am sorry, one so learned and so wise
As you, lord Angelo, have still appear'd,
Should slip so grossly, both in the heat of blood,
And lack of temper'd judgment afterward.

Ang. I am sorry, that such sorrow I procure;
And so deep sticks it in my penitent heart,
That I crave death more willingly than mercy:
'Tis my deserving, and I do entreat it.

Re-enter Provost, BARNARDINE, CLAUDIO, *and* JULIET.

Duke. Which is that Barnardine?

Prov. This, my lord.

Duke. There was a friar told me of this man. —

Sirrah, thou art said to have a stubborn soul,
That apprehends no further than this world,
And squar'st thy life according: Thou'rt condemn'd:
But, for those earthly [43] faults, I quit them all;
And pray thee, take this mercy to provide
For better times to come. — Friar, advise him:
I leave him to your hand. — What muffled fellow's that?

Prov. This is another prisoner that I sav'd,
That should have died when Claudio lost his head;
As like almost to Claudio, as himself.

[*Unmuffles* CLAUDIO.

Duke. [*To* ISAB.] If he be like your brother, for his sake
Is he pardon'd: And, for your lovely sake,
Give me your hand, and say you will be mine;
He is my brother too: But fitter time for that.
By this, lord Angelo perceives he's safe:
Methinks I see a quickening in his eye: —
Well, Angelo, your evil quits [44] you well:
Look that you love your wife; her worth, worth yours. [45] —
I find an apt remission in myself;
And yet here's one in place I cannot pardon: —
[*To* LUCIO.] You, sirrah, that knew me for a fool, a coward,
One all of luxury, [46] an ass, a madman;
Wherein have I so deserv'd of you,
That you extol me thus?

Lucio. 'Faith, my lord, I spoke it but according to the trick: [47] If you will hang me for it, you may;

[43] That is, so far as they are punishable on *earth*.
[44] Requites.
[45] That is, "her value is equal to yours; the match is not unworthy of you."
[46] Incontinence.
[47] Thoughtless practice.

but I had rather it would please you I might be whipp'd.

Duke. Whipp'd first, sir, and hang'd after.—
Proclaim it, provost, round about the city,
If any woman's wrong'd by this lewd fellow,
(As I have heard him swear himself there's one
Whom he begot with child,) let her appear,
And he shall marry her: the nuptial finish'd,
Let him be whipp'd and hang'd.

Lucio. I beseech your highness, do not marry me to a whore! Your highness said even now, I made you a duke: good my lord, do not recompense me in making me a cuckold.

Duke. Upon mine honour, thou shalt marry her.
Thy slanders I forgive; and therewithal
Remit thy other forfeits:[48]—Take him to prison;
And see our pleasure herein executed.

Lucio. Marrying a punk, my lord, is pressing to death, whipping, and hanging.

Duke. Slandering a prince deserves it.—
She, Claudio, that you wrong'd, look you restore.
Joy to you, Mariana!—love her, Angelo:
I have confess'd her, and I know her virtue.—
Thanks, good friend Escalus, for thy much good
ness:
There's more behind, that is more gratulate.[49]
Thanks, provost, for thy care and secrecy;
We shall employ thee in a worthier place:—
Forgive him, Angelo, that brought you home
The head of Ragozine for Claudio's:
The offence pardons itself.—Dear Isabel,

[48] Dr. Johnson says, *forfeits* means *punishments;* but is it not more likely to signify *misdoings, transgressions,* from the French *forfait?* Steevens's note affords instances of the word in this sense.

[49] That is, more *to be rejoiced in.*

I have a motion much imports your good;
Whereto if you'll a willing ear incline,
What's mine is yours, and what is yours is mine. —
So, bring us to our palace; where we'll show
What's yet behind, that's meet you all should know
[*Exeunt.*

INTRODUCTION

TO

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

THE earliest notice that has reached us of MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING is an entry in the books of the Stationers' Company, bearing date August 4, 1600, and running thus:

"As You Like It, a book.
"Henry the Fifth, a book.
"Every Man in his Humour, a book.
"Much Ado about Nothing, a book. } To be stayed."

Why these plays were thus entered and the publication stayed, cannot be certainly determined: probably it was to protect the authorized publishers and the public against those "stolen and surreptitious copies" which the editors of the folio allege to have been put forth. In the same Register, under the date of August 23, 1600, the following entry was made by Andrew Wise and William Aspley: "Two books, the one called Much Ado about Nothing, and the other The Second Part of the History of King Henry the IV., with the Humours of Sir John Falstaff: Written by Mr. Shakespeare." This entry was for publication; which may infer that the stay of August 4 had been revoked by the 23d of the same month. In the course of the same year a quarto pamphlet of thirty-six leaves was published, with a title-page reading as follows: "Much Ado about Nothing: As it hath been sundry times publicly acted by the right honourable the Lord Chamberlain his servants. Written by William Shakespeare. — London: Printed by V. S. for Andrew Wise and William Aspley. 1600." The frequent use of the play on the public stage, and the need of a stay to prevent a stolen issue, may doubtless be taken as evidence of a pretty good run. There is one more contemporary reference to this play, which should not be omitted. Mr. Steevens ascertained from one of Vertue's manuscripts that Much Ado about Nothing once passed under the title of Benedick and Beatrice;

and that Heminge the player received on the 20th of May, 1613 the sum of 40 pounds, and 20 pounds more as his Majesty's gratuity, for exhibiting six plays at Hampton Court, among which was this comedy.

Except the quarto of 1600, there was no other edition of Much Ado about Nothing, that we know of, till the folio of 1623, where it stands the sixth in the division of Comedies. In the first edition neither the scenes nor the acts, in the second only the latter, are marked. Some question has been made whether the folio were a reprint of the quarto, or from another manuscript. Considerable might be urged on either side of the question: but the arguments would hardly pay for the stating; the differences between the two copies being so few and slight as to make it of little consequence whether they were printed from several manuscripts, or the one from the other. And the superior authority of the quarto is sufficiently established in that it came out during the author's life, and when he was at hand to correct the proof: besides, in nearly every case of difference the reading of the quarto seems better in itself. There is one point, however, bearing rather in favor of several manuscripts, which ought perhaps to be stated. In Act ii. sc. 3, one of the stage directions in the folio is, — "Enter Prince, Leonato, Claudio, and *Jack Wilson*," thus substituting the name of the actor for that of the character; which looks very much as if the whole came fresh from the prompter's book. Wilson was a celebrated stage singer of that time; and we thus learn that he performed the part of Balthazar. Again, in Act iv. sc. 2, both quarto and folio set the names of Kemp and Cowley before the speeches of Dogberry and Verges; thus showing what actors originally played the parts of those immortal magistrates. So far as the question of several manuscripts is concerned, perhaps the agreement of the two editions in this latter case may be fairly regarded as offsetting their difference in the former, as Kemp had been dead some years when the folio appeared. It may be worth the while to add, that the folio omits some passages that are found in the quarto, two of which, besides being quite at home where they stand, are too good to be lost. One is the following part of Don Pedro's speech in Act iii. sc. 2: "Or in the shape of two countries at once; as a German from the waist downward, all slops, and a Spaniard from the hip upward, no doublet:" which Mr. Collier thinks may have been left out in consequence of some change of fashion between 1600 and 1623. The other passage includes a part of Dogberry's speech in Act iv. sc. 2: "Write down — that they hope they serve God: — and write God first; for God defend but God should go before such villains:" which, as Blackstone suggests, may have been thrown out in 1623, on account of a law made in the third year of James I. against the irreverent use of the sacred Name.

What with the copies of 1600 and 1623, the text of Much Ado

about Nothing, except in one instance, is every where so clear and well-settled as almost to foreclose controversy. That exception is the last verse of the Song in Act v. sc. 3; where the best result we can come to will be found in a note.

This play, as may be seen in our Introduction to The Two Gentlemen of Verona, is not in the list given by Francis Meres in 1598. As Meres' purpose was to set forth the Poet's excellence in comedy, it is hardly to be supposed that he would have taken The Two Gentlemen of Verona and left Much Ado about Nothing, if the latter had then been known. This circumstance, therefore, together with the publishing of the play in the latter part of 1600, sufficiently ascertains the probable date of the composition. Allowing time enough for a successful run upon the boards, and for such a growth of popularity as to invite a fraudulent publication, the play could scarce have been written after 1599, when the Poet was in his thirty-fifth year.

As in many other of our Author's plays, a part of the plot and story of Much Ado about Nothing was borrowed. But the same matter had been borrowed so many times before, and run into so many variations, that we cannot affirm with certainty to what source Shakespeare was immediately indebted. Mrs. Lenox, indeed, characteristically instructs us, that the Poet here "borrowed just enough to show his poverty of invention, and added enough to prove his want of judgment:" and this choice dropping of criticism, like many others vouchsafed by her learned ladyship, is too wise, if not too womanly, to need any comment from us, save that the Poet can better afford to have such things said, than the sayer can to have them repeated.

Pope says, — "The story is taken from Ariosto." And so much of it as relates to Hero, Claudio, and John, certainly bears a strong resemblance to the tale of Ariodante and Genevra, which occupies the whole of the fifth and part of the sixth books of Ariosto's Orlando Furioso. A translation of this part of the poem by Peter Beverly was licensed for the press in 1565; and Warton tells us it was reprinted in 1600; which is of some consequence as suggesting that Shakespeare's play may have had something to do with the republication. An English version of Ariosto's whole poem, by Sir John Harrington, came out in 1591; but Much Ado about Nothing yields no traces of the Author's having been with Sir John. And indeed the fixing of any obligations in this quarter is the more difficult, forasmuch as the same matter appears to have been borrowed by Ariosto himself. For the story of a lady betrayed to peril and disgrace by the personation of her waiting-woman was an old European tradition: it has been traced to Spain; and Ariosto interwove it with the adventures of Rinaldo, as yielding an apt occasion for his chivalrous heroism. An outline of the story as told by Ariosto is thus given by Mr. Knight

"The Lady Genevra, so falsely accused, was doomed to die

unless a true knight came within a month to do battle for her honour. Her lover, Ariodante, had fled, and was reported to have perished. The wicked duke, Polinesso, who had betrayed Genevra, appears secure in his treachery. But the misguided woman, Dalinda, who had been the instrument of his crime, flying from her paramour, meets with Rinaldo, and declares the truth. Then comes the combat, in which the guilty duke is slain by the champion of innocence, and the lover reappears to be made happy with his spotless princess."

From which it will be seen at once that the Polinesso of the poem answers to the John of the play. But there is this important difference, that the motive of the former in vilifying the lady is to drive away her lover, that he may have her himself; where as the latter acts from a self-generated malignity of spirit that takes pleasure in blasting the happiness of others without any hope of supplanting them.

Spenser, whose genius sucked in whatsoever was rich and rare in all the resources that learning could accumulate, seems to have followed Ariosto in working the same tale into the variegated structure of his great poem: but the Englishman so used it as to set forth a high moral lesson; the Italian, to minister opportunity for a romantic adventure. The story of Phedon, relating the treachery of his false friend Philemon, is in Book ii. Canto 4 of the Faery Queene.

The same story also forms the groundwork of one of Bandello's novels; and Mr. Skottowe's brief analysis of that tale will indicate the most probable source of Shakespeare's borrowings:

"Fenicia, the daughter of Lionato, a gentleman of Messina, is betrothed to Timbreo de Cardona. Girondo, a disappointed lover of the young lady, resolves, if possible, to prevent the marriage. He insinuates to Timbreo that his mistress is disloyal, and offers to show him a stranger scaling her chamber window. Timbreo accepts the invitation, and witnesses the hired servant of Girondo, in the dress of a gentleman, ascending a ladder and entering the house of Lionato. Stung with rage and jealousy, Timbreo the next morning accuses his innocent mistress to her father, and rejects the alliance. Fenicia sinks in a swoon; a dangerous illness succeeds; and to stifle all reports injurious to her fame, Lionato proclaims that she is dead. Her funeral rites are performed in Messina, while in truth she lies concealed in the obscurity of a country residence.

"The thought of having occasioned the death of an innocent and lovely female strikes Girondo with horror; in the agony of remorse he confesses his villany to Timbreo, and they both throw themselves on the mercy, and ask forgiveness, of the insulted family of Fenicia. On Timbreo is imposed only the penance of espousing a lady whose face he should not see previous to his marriage: instead of a new bride, whom he expected, he is pre-

sented, at the nuptial altar, with his injured and beloved Fenicia."

How Shakespeare could have come to the knowledge of Bandello's novel, unless through the original, is not easy to explain; no translation of so early a date having been preserved. Which is probably the cause why the critics have been so unwilling to trace him to this source; as it did not suit their theory to allow that he had learning enough to read a simple tale in what was then the most generally-studied language of Europe.

This account of the matter, if it do no more, may serve to show, what is so often shown elsewhere, that in his borrowing of stories Shakespeare seems to have preferred such as were most received into the common circulation of thought, and most familiar to his audience, that he might have some tie of association to draw and hold their minds to the deep lessons of beauty and wisdom which he was ever pouring forth from himself. And surely much less of insight than he possessed might have taught him, that men are apt to study for novelty in proportion as they lack originality; and that where the latter abounds the former may be rather a hindrance than a help.

This placing of the main interest in something higher and better than any mere plot or story can be, is well stated by Coleridge: "The interest in the plot is on account of the characters, not *vice versa*, as in almost all other writers; the plot is a mere canvas, and no more. Take away from Much Ado about Nothing all that is not indispensable to the plot, either as having little to do with it, or, like Dogberry and his comrades, forced into the service, when any other less ingeniously-absurd watchmen and night-constables would have answered the mere necessities of the action; take away Benedick, Beatrice, Dogberry, and the reaction of the former on the character of Hero, — and what will remain? In other writers the main agent of the plot is always the prominent character: John is the mainspring of the plot in this play; but he is merely shown, and then withdrawn."

We have already seen from the external evidence that Much Ado about Nothing was probably written in or near the author's thirty-fifth year. And it requires no great perspicacity to see from the play itself that it naturally falls somewhere in the middle period of his productive years. The style, like that of Twelfth Night, is sustained and equal; easy, natural, and modest in dress and bearing; every where alive indeed with the exhilaration of wit, or humour, or poetry, but without the labored smoothness of his earlier plays, or the penetrating energy and quick, sinewy movement of his later ones. Compared with some of its predecessors, the play shows a decided growth in what may be termed virility of mind: a wider scope, a higher reach, a firmer grasp, have been attained: the Poet's faculties have manifestly been feeding upon tonics, and inhaling invigoration: he has come to read

nature less through "the spectacles of books," and does not hesitate to meet her face to face, and trust and try himself alone with her. The result of all which appears in a greater freshness and reality of characterization: there being less of a certain dim, equivocal hearsay air about the persons; as if his mind, having outgrown its recollected terms and bookish generalities, had plunged into living intercourse with surrounding life, where his personal observation and experience are blossoming up into poetry and going to seed in philosophy.

Much Ado about Nothing has great variety of interest, now running into the most grotesque drollery, now rising into an almost tragic dignity, now revelling in the most sparkling brilliancy. Its excellences, however, both of plot and of character are rather of the striking sort, involving little of the hidden beauty which shows just enough on the surface to invite a diligent search, and then overpays all the labour it costs. The play, accordingly, has always been very effective on the stage. — The characters of Hero and Claudio, though rather beautiful than otherwise in their simplicity and uprightness, offer no very salient points, and are indeed nowise extraordinary: they derive their interest mainly from the events that befall them; the reverse of which is generally true of Shakespeare's plays. One can scarce help thinking, that had the course of love run smooth with them, its voice, even if audible, had been hardly worth the hearing. Hero, indeed, is altogether gentle and womanly in her ways, and she offers a rather sweet, inviting nestling-place for the fireside affections; and there is something very pathetic and touching in her situation when she is stricken down in mute agony by the tongue of slander. — That Claudio should lend his ear to the poisonous breathings of one whose spirits are known to "toil in frame of villanies," is no little impeachment of his temper, or his understanding; and the preparing us for this, by representing him as falling into a fit of jealousy towards the Prince, is a fine instance of the Poet's skill and care in small matters. A piece of conduct, which the circumstances do not explain, is explained at once by thus disclosing a slight predisposition to jealousy in the subject. In keeping with this part of his behaviour, Claudio's action every where smacks of the soldier: he shows all along both the faults and the virtues of his calling; is sensitive, rash, "quick in quarrel," and as quick in reconciliation; and has a sort of unreflective spontaneousness about him, that is only not so good as a chastened discretion and a firm, steady self-control. This accounts very well for his sudden running into a match, which in itself looks more like a freak of fancy than a resolution of love; while the same suddenness on the side of the more calm, discreet, and patient Hero, is accounted for by the intervention of the Prince, and the sway he might justly have over her thoughts. — Critics have unnecessarily found fault with the Poet for the character of John, as if it lay without the circum

ference of truth and nature. They would apparently prefer the more commonplace character of a disappointed rival in love, whose guilt might be explained away into a pressure of violent motives. But Shakespeare saw deeper into human character; and perhaps his wisest departure from the original story is in making John a moody, sullen, envious rascal, who joys at others' pain, is pained at others' joy, and gloats over his power in working mischief; thus exemplifying in a smaller figure the same innate, spontaneous malice which towers into such a stupendous height of wickedness in Iago. We may well reluct to believe in the fact of such characters; but history is unhappily too full of deeds and plots that cannot be otherwise accounted for; nor need we go far to learn that men may "spin motives out of their own bowels;" and that the man often has more to do in shaping the motive than the motive in determining the man.

Ulrici, regarding the play as setting forth the contrast between *life*, as it is in itself, and as it seems to those engaged in its struggle, looks upon Dogberry as embodying the whole idea of the piece. And, sure enough, the impressive insignificance of his action to the lookers-on is equalled only by its stuffed importance to himself: when he is really most absurd and ridiculous, precisely then it is that he feels most confident and grave; the irony that is rarified into wit and poetry in the other characters being thus condensed into the broadest humour and drollery in him. The German critic, however, is not quite right in thinking that his blundering garrulity brings to light the infernal plot; as it rather keeps it in the dark: he is too fond of hearing himself talk to make known what he has to say, in time to do any good; and amidst his huge struttings and tumblings of mind the truth leaks out at last in spite of him. The part was imitated by other dramatists of the time; which shows it to have been a decided hit on the stage; and perhaps the Poet has evinced something of an author's weakness in attempting a repetition of Dogberry under the name of Elbow in Measure for Measure. But even Shakespeare himself could not make an imitation come up to his own original.

The good repute of Benedick and Beatrice has been greatly perilled by their wit. But it is the ordinary lot of persons so wise as they, to suffer under the misconstructions of prejudice or partial acquaintance; their wisdom augmenting the difficulty of coming to a true knowledge of them. How dangerous it is to be so gifted that way, may be seen by the impression these persons have had the ill luck to make on one whose good opinion is so desirable as Campbell's. He says,—"During one half of the play, we have a disagreeable female character in that of Beatrice. Her portrait, I may be told, is deeply drawn, and minutely finished. It is; and so is that of Benedick, who is entirely her counterpart, except that he is less disagreeable." A little after, he pronounces Beatrice "an odious woman." We are sorry so tasteful and

charming a critic should think so, but suppose there is no help for it. In support of his opinion he quotes Hero's speech, — "Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes," &c.; but he seems to forget that these words are spoken with the intent that Beatrice shall hear them, and at the same time think she overhears them; that is, not as being true, but as being suited to a certain end, and as having just enough of truth to be effective for that end. So that, viewed in reference to the speaker's purpose, perhaps nothing could be better; viewed as describing the character of Beatrice, scarce any thing were worse; and the effect the speech has on her proves it is not true. To the same end, the Prince, Leonato, and Claudio speak as much the other way, where they know Benedick is overhearing them; and what is there said in her favor is just a fair offset of what was before said against her. But indeed it is clear enough that a speech thus made really for the ear of the subject, yet seemingly in confidence to another person, cannot be received in evidence against her.

Fortunately, however for Beatrice, the critic's unfavorable opinion is accounted for by what himself has unfortunately witnessed. He says, — "I once knew such a pair; the lady was a perfect Beatrice; she railed hypocritically at wedlock before her marriage, and with bitter sincerity after it. She and her Benedick now live apart, but with entire reciprocity of sentiments; each devoutly wishing that the other may soon pass into a better world." So that the writer's strong dislike of Beatrice is one of the finest testimonies we have seen to the Poet's wonderful truth of delineation; inasmuch as it shows how our views of his characters, as of those in real life, depend less perhaps on what they are in themselves, than on our own peculiar associations. Nature's and Shakespeare's men and women seem very differently to different persons, and even to the same persons at different times. Need it be said that this is because the characters are individuals, not abstractions? — Viewed therefore in this light, the tribute is so exquisite that we half suspect the author meant it as such. In itself, however, we much prefer the ground taken by other critics: That in the unamiable part of their deportment Benedick and Beatrice are but playing; that their playing is with a view to conceal, not express, their real feelings; that it is the very strength of their feelings that puts and keeps them upon this mode of concealment; and that the exclusive pointing of their raillery against each other is itself proof of a deep and growing attachment: though it must be confessed, that the ability to play so well is a great temptation to carry it to excess, or where it will be apt to cause something else than mirth. This it is that justifies the repetition of the stratagem, the same process being necessary in both cases "to get rid of their reciprocal disguises, and make them straightforward and in earnest." And the effect of the stratagem is to begin the unmasking which is so thoroughly completed by the wrongs and sufferings of

Hero. they are thus disciplined, for a time at least, out of their playing, and made to show themselves as they are: before we saw but their art, now we see their virtue; and this, though not a little clouded with faults, strikes us as something rather noble.

The wit of these persons, though seeming at first view much the same, is very nicely discriminated, discovering in her more spright liness, in him more strength, of mind. Beatrice, intelligent but thoughtless, has little of reflection in her wit; but throws it off in rapid flashes whenever any object ministers a spark to her fancy. Though of the most piercing keenness and the most exquisite aptness, there is no ill-nature about it; it stings indeed, but does not poison. The offspring merely of the moment and the occasion, it strikes the fancy, but leaves no trace on the memory; but we feel that she forgets it as soon as we do. Its agility is infinite: wherever it may be, the instant one goes to put his hand upon it, he is sure to find or feel it somewhere else. — The wit of Benedick, on the other hand, springs more from reflection, and grows with the growth of thought. With all the pungency and nearly all the pleasantry, it lacks the free, spontaneous volubility, of hers. Hence in their skirmishes she always gets the better of him. But he makes ample amends when out of her presence, trundling of jests in whole paragraphs. In short, if his wit be slower, it is also stronger than hers: not so agile in manner, more weighty in matter, it shines less, but burns more; and as it springs much less out of the occasion, so it will bear repeating much better. — The effect of the serious events in bringing these persons into an armistice of wit is indeed a rare stroke of art; and perhaps some such thing was necessary, to prevent the impression of their being jesters by trade. It proves at least that Beatrice is a witty woman, and not a mere female wit.

The general view of life, as opened out in this play, is pretty clearly indicated by the title. The characters do indeed make or have *much ado;* but all the while to us who are in the secret, and ultimately to the persons themselves, all this much ado proves to be *about nothing*. Which is but a common difference in the aspect of things, as they appear to the spectators and to the partakers; it needs but an average experience to discover that real life is full of just such passages: what troubled and worried us yesterday, made others laugh then, and makes us laugh to-day: what we fret or grieve at in the progress, we still smile and make merry over in the result. This, we believe, is the simple upshot of what Ulrici, writing in a style that few know or care to understand, has discoursed upon with *much ado*, though we cannot quite add *about nothing*.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

DON PEDRO, Prince of Arragon.
JOHN, his bastard Brother.
CLAUDIO, a young Lord of Florence, } Favourites of
BENEDICK, a young Lord of Padua, } Don Pedro.
LEONATO, Governor of Messina.
ANTONIO, his Brother.
BALTHAZAR, Servant to Don Pedro
BORACHIO, } Followers of John.
CONRADE, }
DOGBERRY, } Two foolish Officers.
VERGES, }
FRANCIS, a Friar.
A Sexton.
A Boy.

HERO, Daughter to Leonato.
BEATRICE, Niece to Leonato.
MARGARET, } Gentlewomen attending on Hero.
URSULA, }

Messengers, Watchmen, and Attendants.

SCENE, Messina

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

ACT I.

SCENE I. Before LEONATO's House.

Enter LEONATO, HERO, BEATRICE, *and others, with a Messenger.*

Leon. I LEARN in this letter, that Don Pedro of Arragon comes this night to Messina.

Mess. He is very near by this: he was not three leagues off when I left him.

Leon. How many gentlemen have you lost in this action?

Mess. But few of any sort, and none of name.

Leon. A victory is twice itself, when the achiever brings home full numbers. I find here, that Don Pedro hath bestowed much honour on a young Florentine, called Claudio.

Mess. Much deserv'd on his part, and equally remembered by Don Pedro: He hath borne himself beyond the promise of his age, doing in the figure of a lamb the feats of a lion: he hath, indeed, better better'd expectation, than you must expect of me to tell you how.

Leon. He hath an uncle here in Messina will be very much glad of it.

Mess. I have already delivered him letters, and there appears much joy in him; even so much, that

joy could not show itself modest enough, without a badge of bitterness.[1]

Leon. Did he break out into tears?

Mess. In great measure.

Leon. A kind overflow of kindness: There are no faces truer than those that are so wash'd. How much better it is to weep at joy, than to joy at weeping!

Beat. I pray you, is signior Montanto[2] return'd from the wars, or no?

Mess. I know none of that name, lady: there was none such in the army of any sort.[3]

Leon. What is he that you ask for, niece?

Hero. My cousin means signior Benedick of Padua.

Mess. O! he is return'd; and as pleasant as ever he was.

Beat. He set up his bills[4] here in Messina, and challeng'd Cupid at the flight;[5] and my uncle's fool, reading the challenge, subscrib'd for Cupid,

[1] In Chapman's version of the 10th Odyssey, a somewhat similar expression occurs: "Our eyes wore the same wet badge of weak humanity." This is an idea which Shakespeare apparently delighted to introduce. It occurs again in Macbeth: "My plenteous joys, wanton in fulness, seek to hide themselves in drops of sorrow."

[2] *Montanto* is an old term of the fencing-school, humorously or sarcastically applied here in the sense of a *bravado*. See The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act. ii. sc. 3, note 2. H.

[3] *Sort* is here used in the sense of *rank*. So, in A Midsummer-Night's Dream, Act iii. sc. 2: "None of nobler *sort* would so offend a virgin;" and in Measure for Measure, Act iv. sc. 4: "Give notice to such men of *sort* and suit, as are to meet him." H.

[4] This phrase was in common use for affixing a printed notice in some public place, long before Shakespeare's time, and long after.

[5] That is, dared him to a match with the flight. The *flight* was a long, slender, sharp arrow, such as Cupid shot with, so called because used for *flying* long distances, and to distinguish it from the *bird-bolt*, a short, thick, blunt arrow, used in a lower kind of

and challeng'd him at the bird-bolt. — I pray you, how many hath he kill'd and eaten in these wars? But how many hath he kill'd? for, indeed, I promis'd to eat all of his killing.

Leon. Faith, niece, you tax signior Benedick too much; but he'll be meet with you,[6] I doubt it not.

Mess. He hath done good service, lady, in these wars.

Beat. You had musty victual, and he hath holp to eat it: he is a very valiant trencher-man; he hath an excellent stomach.

Mess. And a good soldier too, lady.

Beat. And a good soldier to a lady; — but what is he to a lord?

Mess. A lord to a lord, a man to a man; stuff'd[7] with all honorable virtues.

Beat. It is so, indeed: he is no less than a stuff'd man; but for the stuffing! — Well, we are all mortal.

Leon. You must not, sir, mistake my niece. There is a kind of merry war betwixt signior Benedick and her: they never meet, but there's a skirmish of wit between them.

Beat. Alas! he gets nothing by that. In our last conflict four of his five wits[8] went halting off, and

archery, and permitted to fools. "A fool's bolt is soon shot," is an old proverb. See Twelfth Night, Act i. sc. 5, note 5. H.

[6] That is, he'll be *even* with you; or, as we should say, he'll be *up with* you. H.

[7] Mede, in his discourses on Scripture, speaking of Adam, says, "He whom God had *stuffed* with so many excellent qualities." Beatrice starts an idea at the words *stuffed man*, and prudently checks herself in the pursuit of it. A stuffed man appears to have been one of the many cant phrases for a cuckold.

[8] In Shakespeare's time, *the five wits* was used to denote both the five senses, and the intellectual powers, which were thought to correspond with the senses in number. Here it of course means the latter; as in the Poet's 141st Sonnet:

now is the whole man govern'd with one: so that if he have wit enough to keep himself warm, let him bear it for a difference[9] between himself and his horse; for it is all the wealth that he hath left, to be known a reasonable creature. — Who is his companion now? He hath every month a new sworn brother.

Mess. Is't possible?

Beat. Very easily possible: he wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat; it ever changes with the next block.[10]

Mess. I see, lady, the gentleman is not in your books.[11]

Beat. No; an he were, I would burn my study. But, I pray you, who is his companion? Is there no young squarer[12] now, that will make a voyage with him to the devil?

Mess. He is most in the company of the right noble Claudio.

Beat. O Lord! he will hang upon him like a disease: he is sooner caught than the pestilence.

> "But my *five wits*, nor my *five senses* can
> Dissuade one foolish heart from serving thee." H.

[9] This is an heraldic term. So, in Hamlet, Ophelia says, — "You may wear your rue with a *difference*."

[10] The mould on which a hat is formed. It is here used for *shape* or *fashion*.

[11] The most probable account derives this phrase from the custom of servants and retainers being entered in the books of those to whom they were attached. *To be in one's books* was *to be in favour*. That this was the ancient sense of the phrase, and its origin, appears from Florio: "*Casso*. Cashier'd, crossed, cancelled, or put *out of booke* and checke roule."

[12] That is, *quarreller*. To *square* was to take a posture of defiance or of resistance So, in A Midsummer-Night's Dream, Act ii. sc. 1:

> "And now they never meet in grove or green,
> By fountain clear, or spangled star-light sheen,
> But they do *square*." H.

and the taker runs presently mad. God help the noble Claudio! if he have caught the Benedick, it will cost him a thousand pound ere he be cur'd.

Mess. I will hold friends with you, lady.

Beat. Do, good friend.

Leon. You'll ne'er run mad, niece.

Beat. No, not till a hot January.

Mess. Don Pedro is approach'd.

Enter Don PEDRO, JOHN, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, BALTHAZAR, *and others.*

D. Pedro. Good signior Leonato, are you come to meet your trouble? the fashion of the world is to avoid cost, and you encounter it.

Leon. Never came trouble to my house in the likeness of your grace: for, trouble being gone, comfort should remain; but, when you depart from me, sorrow abides, and happiness takes his leave.

D. Pedro. You embrace your charge too willingly. — I think this is your daughter.

Leon. Her mother hath many times told me so.

Bene. Were you in doubt, sir, that you ask'd her?

Leon. Signior Benedick, no; for then were you a child.

D. Pedro. You have it full, Benedick: we may guess by this what you are, being a man. Truly, the lady fathers herself:[13] — Be happy, lady, for you are like an honourable father.

Bene. If signior Leonato be her father, she would not have his head on her shoulders for all Messina, as like him as she is

[13] This phrase is common in Dorsetshire: "Jack fathers himself," is like his father.

Beat. I wonder that you will still be talking signior Benedick: nobody marks you.

Bene. What, my dear lady Disdain! are you yet living?

Beat. Is it possible disdain should die, while she hath such meet food to feed it as signior Benedick? Courtesy itself must convert to disdain, if you come in her presence.

Bene. Then is courtesy a turncoat: — But it is certain, I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted: and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart; for, truly, I love none.

Beat. A dear happiness to women: they would else have been troubled with a pernicious suitor. I thank God, and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that: I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow, than a man swear he loves me.

Bene. God keep your ladyship still in that mind! so some gentleman or other shall 'scape a predestinate scratch'd face.

Beat. Scratching could not make it worse, an 'twere such a face as yours were.

Bene. Well, you are a rare parrot-teacher.

Beat. A bird of my tongue is better than a beast of yours.

Bene. I would my horse had the speed of your tongue; and so good a continuer: But keep your way o'God's name! I have done.

Beat. You always end with a jade's trick: I know you of old.

D. Pedro. This is the sum of all: Leonato, — signior Claudio, and signior Benedick, — my dear friend Leonato, hath invited you all. I tell him we shall stay here at the least a month, and he heartily prays some occasion may detain us longer: I

dare swear he is no hypocrite, but prays from his heart.

Leon. If you swear, my lord, you shall not be forsworn. — Let me bid you welcome, my lord: being reconciled to the prince your brother, I owe you all duty.

John. I thank you: I am not of many words, but I thank you.

Leon. Please it your grace lead on?

D. Pedro. Your hand, Leonato: we will go together. [*Exeunt all but* BENEDICK *and* CLAUDIO.

Claud. Benedick, didst thou note the daughter of signior Leonato?

Bene. I noted her not; but I look'd on her.

Claud. Is she not a modest young lady?

Bene. Do you question me, as an honest man should do, for my simple true judgment; or would you have me speak after my custom, as being a professed tyrant to their sex?

Claud. No; I pray thee, speak in sober judgment.

Bene. Why, i'faith, methinks she's too low for a high praise, too brown for a fair praise, and too little for a great praise: only this commendation I can afford her; that were she other than she is, she were unhandsome; and being no other but as she is, I do not like her.

Claud. Thou think'st I am in sport: I pray thee, tell me truly how thou lik'st her.

Bene. Would you buy her, that you inquire after her?

Claud. Can the world buy such a jewel?

Bene. Yea, and a case to put it into. But speak you this with a sad brow, or do you play the flouting Jack, to tell us Cupid is a good hare-finder, and

Vulcan a rare carpenter ?[14] Come, in what key shall a man take you, to go in the song ?[15]

Claud. In mine eye, she is the sweetest lady that ever I look'd on.

Bene. I can see yet without spectacles, and I see no such matter: there's her cousin, an she were not possess'd with a fury, exceeds her as much in beauty, as the first of May doth the last of December. But I hope you have no intent to turn husband, have you ?

Claud. I would scarce trust myself, though I had sworn the contrary, if Hero would be my wife.

Bene. Is't come to this, i'faith ? Hath not the world one man, but he will wear his cap with suspicion ?[16] Shall I never see a bachelor of threescore again ? Go to, i'faith; an thou wilt needs thrust thy neck into a yoke, wear the print of it, and sign away Sundays.[17] Look, Don Pedro is returned to seek you.

Re-enter Don PEDRO.

D Pedro. What secret hath held you here, that you followed not to Leonato's ?

Bene. I would your grace would constrain me to tell.

D. Pedro. I charge thee on thy allegiance.

Bene. You hear, Count Claudio: I can be secret as a dumb man, I would have you think so; but on

[14] Do you scoff and mock in telling us that Cupid, who is blind, is a good hare-finder; and that Vulcan, a blacksmith, is a good carpenter ?

[15] That is, join you, go along with you, in singing. H.

[16] That is, subject his head to the disquiet of jealousy.

[17] That is, become sad and serious, alluding to the manner in which the Puritans usually spent Sunday, with sighs and grunt ings, and other hypocritical marks of devotion.

my allegiance, — mark you this, on my allegiance. — He is in love. With whom? — now that is your grace's part. — Mark, how short his answer is: — With Hero, Leonato's short daughter.

Claud. If this were so, so were it utter'd.

Bene. Like the old tale, my lord: it is not so, nor 'twas not so; but, indeed, God forbid it should be so.[18]

[18] In illustration of this passage Mr. Blakeway has given his recollections of an old tale, which he thinks may be the one alluded to, very like some that we in our boyhood have often lain awake to hear, and been kept awake with thinking of after the hearing. "Once upon a time there lived a Mr. Fox, a bachelor, who made it his business to decoy or force young women to his house, that he might have their skeletons to adorn his chambers with. Near by dwelt a family, the lady Mary and her two brothers, whom Mr. Fox often visited, they, especially the lady, being much pleased with his company. One day, the lady, being left alone and having nothing else to do, thought to amuse herself by calling upon Mr. Fox, as he had often invited her to do. Knocking some time, but finding no one at home, she at length opened and went in. Over the portal was written, *Be bold, be bold, but not too bold.* Going forward, she saw the same over the stairway, and again over the door of the chamber at the head of the stairs. Opening this door, she saw at once what sort of work was carried on there. Retreating hastily, she saw out of the window Mr. Fox coming, holding a sword in one hand, and with the other dragging a young lady by the hair. She had just time to hide herself under the stairs before he entered. As he was going up stairs the young lady caught hold of the banister with her hand, whereon was a rich bracelet; he then cut off her hand, and it fell, bracelet and all, into Mary's lap, who took it, and, as soon as she could, hastened home. A few days after, Mr. Fox came to dine with her and her brothers. As they were entertaining each other with stories, she said she would tell them a strange dream she had lately had. She said, — I dreamed, Mr. Fox, that as you had often invited me to your house, I went there one morning. When I came, I knocked, but no one answered; when I opened the door, over the hall was written, *Be bold, be bold, but not too bold.* But, said she, turning to Mr. Fox and smiling, — *It is not so, nor it was not so.* Then she went on with the story, repeating this at every turn, till she came to the room full of dead bodies, when Mr. Fox took up the burden of the tale, saying, — *It is not so, nor it was not so, and God forbid it should be so;* which he kept repeating at every turn of the dread

Claud. If my passion change not shortly, God forbid it should be otherwise.

D. Pedro. Amen, if you love her; for the lady is very well worthy.

Claud. You speak this to fetch me in, my lord.

D. Pedro. By my troth, I speak my thought.

Claud. And in faith, my lord, I spoke mine.

Bene. And, by my two faiths and troths, my lord, I spoke mine.

Claud. That I love her, I feel.

D. Pedro. That she is worthy, I know.

Bene. That I neither feel how she should be loved, nor know how she should be worthy, is the opinion that fire cannot melt out of me: I will die in it at the stake.

D. Pedro. Thou wast ever an obstinate heretic n the despite of beauty.

Claud. And never could maintain his part, but in the force of his will.[19]

Bene. That a woman conceived me, I thank her. that she brought me up, I likewise give her most humble thanks; but that I will have a recheat[20] winded in my forehead, or hang my bugle in an invisible baldrick, all women shall pardon me: Because I will not do them the wrong to mistrust any,

ful story, till she came to his cutting off the lady's hand; then, upon his saying the same words, she replied, — *But it is so, and it was so, and here the hand I have to show,* at the same time producing the hand and bracelet from her lap; whereupon the guests drew their swords, and cut Mr. Fox into a thousand pieces." H

[19] Alluding to the definition of a heretic in the schools.

[20] Some of the Poet's jests about horns might well be spared. Benedick's meaning seems to be, that he would not render himself liable to have such an ornament in his forehead. A *recheat* was a peculiar sound of the bugle, whereby the hounds were called back from the chase. *Baldrick* is the belt whereby the huntsman's horn is slung. It is here called *invisible,* in reference to the same ideal horn, which, though never *seen,* is sometimes *felt.* H

I will do myself the right to trust none; and the fine[21] is, (for the which I may go the finer,) I will live a bachelor.

D. Pedro. I shall see thee, ere I die, look pale with love.

Bene. With anger, with sickness, or with hunger, my lord; not with love: prove, that ever I lose more blood with love, than I will get again with drinking, pick out mine eyes with a ballad-maker's pen, and hang me up at the door of a brothel-house, for the sign of blind Cupid.

D. Pedro. Well, if ever thou dost fall from this faith, thou wilt prove a notable argument.

Bene. If I do, hang me in a bottle like a cat,[22] and shoot at me; and he that hits me, let him be clapp'd on the shoulder, and call'd Adam.[23]

D. Pedro. Well, as time shall try:

"In time the savage bull doth bear the yoke."[24]

Bene. The savage bull may; but if ever the sensible Benedick bear it, pluck off the bull's horns, and set them in my forehead; and let me be vilely painted, and in such great letters as they write, "Here is good horse to hire," let them signify under my sign — "Here you may see Benedick the married man."

Claud. If this should ever happen, thou wouldst be horn-mad.

D. Pedro. Nay, if Cupid have not spent all

[21] *The fine* is the conclusion.

[22] It seems to have been one of the inhuman sports of the time to enclose a cat in a wooden tub or bottle suspended aloft to be shot at.

[23] That is, Adam Bell. "a passing good archer," who, with Clym of the Clough and William of Cloudesly, were outlaws as famous in the north of England as Robin Hood and his fellows were in the midland counties.

[24] This line is from The Spanish Tragedy.

his quiver in Venice,[25] thou wilt quake for this shortly.

Bene. I look for an earthquake too, then.

D. Pedro. Well, you will temporize with the hours. In the mean time, good signior Benedick, repair to Leonato's: commend me to him, and tell him I will not fail him at supper; for, indeed, he hath made great preparation.

Bene. I have almost matter enough in me for such an embassage; and so I commit you —

Claud. To the tuition of God: From my house, if I had it. —

D. Pedro. The sixth of July: Your loving friend, Benedick.

Bene. Nay, mock not, mock not: The body of your discourse is sometime guarded[26] with fragments, and the guards are but slightly basted on neither: ere you flout old ends[27] any further, examine your conscience, and so I leave you. [*Exit* BENEDICK.

Claud. My liege, your highness now may do me good.

D. Pedro. My love is thine to teach: teach it but how,
And thou shalt see how apt it is to learn
Any hard lesson that may do thee good.

Claud. Hath Leonato any son, my lord?

D. Pedro. No child but Hero, she's his only heir:
Dost thou affect her, Claudio?

Claud. O! my lord,
When you went onward on this ended action,
I look'd upon her with a soldier's eye,

[25] Venice bore much the same character in Shakespeare's time as Paris does in ours; being celebrated as the great metropolis of profligate intrigue and pleasure. H.

[26] *Guards* were trimmings, ornaments of dress, what we call *facings*. See Measure for Measure, Act. iii. sc. 1. H.

[27] *Old ends* probably means the conclusions of letters, which were frequently couched in the quaint forms used above.

That lik'd, but had a rougher task in hand
Than to drive liking to the name of love:
But now I am return'd, and that war-thoughts
Have left their places vacant, in their rooms
Come thronging soft and delicate desires,
All prompting me how fair young Hero is,
Saying I lik'd her ere I went to wars.

D. Pedro. Thou wilt be like a lover presently,
And tire the hearer with a book of words:
If thou dost love fair Hero, cherish it;
And I will break with her, and with her father,
And thou shalt have her: Was't not to this end,
That thou began'st to twist so fine a story?

Claud. How sweetly do you minister to love,
That know love's grief by his complexion!
But lest my liking might too sudden seem,
I would have salv'd it with a longer treatise.

D. Pedro. What need the bridge much broader than the flood?
The fairest grant is the necessity:[28]
Look, what will serve, is fit: 'tis once,[29] thou lov'st;
And I will fit thee with the remedy.
I know we shall have revelling to-night:
I will assume thy part in some disguise,
And tell fair Hero I am Claudio;
And in her bosom I'll unclasp my heart,
And take her hearing prisoner with the force
And strong encounter of my amorous tale:
Then, after, to her father will I break;
And, the conclusion is, she shall be thine:
In practice let us put it presently. [*Exeunt.*

[28] Mr. Hayley, with great acuteness, proposed to read, "The fairest grant is *to* necessity;" i. e., *necessitas quod cogit defendit.* The meaning may, however, be, — "The fairest or most equitable concession is that which is needful only."

[29] That is, once for all. So, in Coriolanus: "*Once* if he do require our voices, we ought not to deny him."

SCENE II. A Room in LEONATO's House.

Enter LEONATO *and* ANTONIO.

Leon. How now, brother? Where is my cousin, your son? Hath he provided this music?

Ant. He is very busy about it. But, brother, I can tell you strange news that you yet dream'd not of.

Leon. Are they good?

Ant. As the event stamps them; but they have a good cover; they show well outward. The prince and Count Claudio, walking in a thick-pleached alley in my orchard, were thus much overheard by a man of mine: The prince discovered to Claudio, that he loved my niece your daughter, and meant to acknowledge it this night in a dance; and, if he found her accordant, he meant to take the present time by the top, and instantly break with you of it.

Leon. Hath the fellow any wit, that told you this?

Ant. A good sharp fellow: I will send for him, and question him yourself.

Leon. No, no; we will hold it as a dream, till it appear itself: — but I will acquaint my daughter withal, that she may be the better prepared for an answer, if peradventure this be true. Go you, and tell her of it. [*Several persons cross the stage.*] Cousins,[2] you know what you have to do. — O! I cry you mercy, friend; go you with me, and I will use your skill: — Good cousins, have a care this busy time. [*Exeunt.*

[1] Thickly interwoven.

[2] *Cousins* were formerly enrolled among the dependants, if not the domestics, of great families, such as that of Leonato. — Petruchio, while intent on the subjection of Katharine, calls out in terms imperative for his *cousin* Ferdinand.

SCENE III. Another Room in LEONATO's House.

Enter JOHN *and* CONRADE.

Con. What the good year,[1] my lord! why are you thus out of measure sad?

John There is no measure in the occasion that breeds it, therefore the sadness is without limit.

Con. You should hear reason.

John. And when I have heard it, what blessing bringeth it?

Con. If not a present remedy, at least a patient sufferance.

John. I wonder that thou, being (as thou say'st thou art) born under Saturn, goest about to apply a moral medicine to a mortifying mischief. I cannot hide what I am:[2] I must be sad when I have cause, and smile at no man's jests; eat when I have stomach, and wait for no man's leisure; sleep when I am drowsy, and tend to no man's business; laugh when I am merry, and claw[3] no man in his humour.

[1] The commentators say, that the original form of this exclamation was the *gougere*, i. e., *morbus gallicus*; which ultimately became obscure, and was corrupted into the *good year*, a very opposite form of expression.

[2] This is one of Shakespeare's natural touches. An envious and unsocial mind, too proud to give pleasure and too sullen to receive it, often endeavours to hide its malignity from the world and from itself, under the plainness of simple honesty or the dignity of haughty independence.

[3] To *claw*, in the sense of to scratch, and to ease by scratching, was often used for to *soothe*, *flatter*, or *curry favour*. Thus, in Howell's Letters: "Here it is not the style to *claw* and compliment with the King." *Claw-back* occurs in the same sense both as a noun and a verb. Thus Camden says of Queen Elizabeth,—"When she often used the saying, That most men neglected the setting sun, these *claw-backs* ceased not to beat into her ears,—Who will neglect the wholesome beams of the clear sun shine, to behold the pitiful sparkling of the smaller stars?" H

Con. Yea, but you must not make the full show of this, till you may do it without controlment. You have of late stood out against your brother, and he hath ta'en you newly into his grace; where it is impossible you should take true root, but by the fair weather that you make yourself: it is needful that you frame the season for your own harvest.

John. I had rather be a canker[4] in a hedge, than a rose in his grace; and it better fits my blood to be disdain'd of all, than to fashion a carriage to rob love from any: in this, though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man, it must not be denied but I am a plain-dealing villain. I am trusted with a muzzle, and enfranchis'd with a clog; therefore I have decreed not to sing in my cage: If I had my mouth, I would bite; if I had my liberty, I would do my liking: in the mean time, let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me.

Con. Can you make no use of your discontent?

John. I make all use of it, for I use it only.[5] Who comes here? What news, Borachio?

Enter BORACHIO.

Bora. I came yonder from a great supper: the prince, your brother, is royally entertained by Leonato; and I can give you intelligence of an intended marriage.

[4] A *canker* is the canker-rose, or dog-rose. So, in Henry IV.

"To put down Richard, that sweet lovely rose,
And plant this thorn, this *canker*, Bolingbroke."

Richardson says that in Devonshire the dog-rose is called the *canker*-rose. The meaning in the text is,—I had rather be a wild dog rose in a hedge, than a garden-rose of his cherishing. H.

[5] That is, "for I make nothing else my counsellor."

John. Will it serve for any model [6] to build mischief on? What is he for a fool, that betroths himself to unquietness?

Bora. Marry, it is your brother's right hand

John. Who? the most exquisite Claudio?

Bora. Even he.

John. A proper squire! And who, and who? which way looks he?

Bora. Marry, on Hero, the daughter and heir of Leonato.

John. A very forward March chick! How came you to this?

Bora. Being entertain'd for a perfumer, as I was smoking a musty room,[7] comes me the prince and Claudio, hand in hand, in sad [8] conference: I whipt me behind the arras, and there heard it agreed upon, that the prince should woo Hero for himself, and having obtain'd her, give her to Count Claudio.

John. Come, come, let us thither: this may prove food to my displeasure: That young start-up hath all the glory of my overthrow: if I can cross him any way, I bless myself every way: You are both sure,[9] and will assist me?

Con. To the death, my lord.

John. Let us to the great supper: their cheer is the greater, that I am subdued: 'Would the cook were of my mind!—Shall we go prove what's to be done!

Bora. We'll wait upon your lordship. [*Exeunt.*

[6] *Model* is here used in an unusual sense, but Bullokar explains it, "*Model*, the *platforme*, or form of any thing."

[7] The neglect of cleanliness among our ancestors rendered such precautions too often necessary. In Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy: "The smoke of juniper is in great request with us at Oxford to *sweeten* our chambers."

[8] Serious.

[9] That is, to be depended on

ACT II.

SCENE I. A Hall in Leonato's House.

Enter Leonato, Antonio, Hero, Beatrice, *and others.*

Leon. Was not count John here at supper?

Ant. I saw him not.

Beat. How tartly that gentleman looks! I never can see him, but I am heart-burn'd an hour after.

Hero. He is of a very melancholy disposition.

Beat. He were an excellent man that were made just in the mid-way between him and Benedick: the one is too like an image, and says nothing; and the other too like my lady's eldest son, evermore tattling.

Leon. Then, half signior Benedick's tongue in count John's mouth, and half count John's melancholy in signior Benedick's face, —

Beat. With a good leg, and a good foot, uncle, and money enough in his purse, such a man would win any woman in the world, — if a' could get her good will.

Leon. By my troth, niece, thou wilt never get thee a husband, if thou be so shrewd of thy tongue

Ant. In faith, she is too curst.

Beat. Too curst is more than curst: I shall lessen God's sending that way: for it is said, "God sends a curst cow short horns;" but to a cow too curst he sends none.

Leon. So, by being too curst, God will send you no horns.

Beat. Just, if he send me no husband; for the

which blessing I am at Him upon my knees every morning and evening: Lord! I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face: I had rather lie in the woollen.

Leon. You may light upon a husband that hath no beard.

Beat. What should I do with him? dress him in my apparel, and make him my waiting gentlewoman? He that hath a beard is more than a youth, and he that hath no beard is less than a man; and he that is more than a youth is not for me, and he that is less than a man I am not for him: Therefore I will even take sixpence in earnest of the bear-ward, and lead his apes into hell.

Leon. Well, then, go you into hell?

Beat. No; but to the gate; and there will the devil meet me, like an old cuckold, with horns on his head, and say, "Get you to heaven, Beatrice, get you to heaven; here's no place for you maids:" so deliver I up my apes, and away to Saint Peter for the heavens: he shows me where the bachelors sit, and there live we as merry as the day is long.

Ant. [*To* HERO.] Well, niece, I trust you will be rul'd by your father.

Beat. Yes, faith; it is my cousin's duty to make courtesy and say, "Father, as it please you:"—but yet for all that, cousin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make another courtesy and say, "Father, as it please me."

Leon. Well, niece, I hope to see you one day fitted with a husband.

Beat. Not till God make men of some other metal than earth. Would it not grieve a woman to be over-master'd with a piece of valiant dust? to make an account of her life to a clod of wayward

marl? No, uncle, I'll none: Adam's sons are my brethren; and, truly, I hold it a sin to match in my kindred.

Leon. Daughter, remember what I told you: if the prince do solicit you in that kind, you know your answer.

Beat. The fault will be in the music, cousin, if you be not wooed in good time: if the prince be too important,[1] tell him there is measure[2] in every thing, and so dance out the answer. For, hear me, Hero: Wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as a Scotch jig, a measure, and a cinque-pace:[3] the first suit is hot and hasty, like a Scotch jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding mannerly-modest, as a measure full of state and ancientry; and then comes repentance, and with his bad legs falls into the cinque-pace faster and faster, till he sink into his grave.

Leon. Cousin, you apprehend passing shrewdly

Beat. I have a good eye, uncle: I can see a church by daylight.

Leon. The revellers are entering, brother: Make good room!

[1] *Important* and *importunate* were sometimes used indiscriminately. See Twelfth Night, Act v. sc. 1, note 17. H.

[2] A *measure*, in old language, besides its ordinary meaning, signified also *a dance*. So, in Richard II.:

> "My legs can keep no *measure* in delight,
> When my poor heart no *measure* keeps in grief."

The *measures* were grave, solemn dances with slow and measured steps like the minuet; and therefore described as "full of state and ancientry."

[3] The *cinque-pace* was a dance, the measures whereof were regulated by the number five. See Twelfth Night, Act i. sc. 3 note 10. H.

Enter Don PEDRO, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, BALTHAZAR; JOHN, BORACHIO, MARGARET, URSULA, *and maskers.*

D. Pedro. Lady, will you walk about with your friend?

Hero. So you walk softly, and look sweetly, and say nothing, I am yours for the walk; and especially when I walk away.

D. Pedro. With me in your company?

Hero. I may say so, when I please.

D. Pedro. And when please you to say so?

Hero. When I like your favour; for God defend, the lute should be like the case![4]

D. Pedro. My visor is Philemon's roof; within the house is Jove.[5]

Hero. Why, then your visor should be thatch'd.

D. Pedro. Speak low, if you speak love.

[*Takes her aside.*

Balth. Well, I would you did like me.

Marg. So would not I, for your own sake; for I have many ill qualities.

Balth. Which is one?

Marg. I say my prayers aloud.

Balth. I love you the better; the hearers may cry Amen.

[4] That is, God forbid that your face should be like your mask.

[5] Alluding to the fable of Baucis and Philemon in Ovid, who describes the old couple as living in a thatched cottage: "*Stipulis et cannâ tecta palustri;*" which Golding renders: "The *roofe* thereof was *thatched* all with straw and fennish reede." Jaques in As You Like It, again alludes to it: "O knowledge ill-inhabited, worse than *Jove in a thatched-house.*"

Marg. And God keep him out of my sight, when the dance is done! — Answer, clerk.

Balth. No more words: the clerk is answered.

Urs. I know you well enough: you are signior Antonio.

Ant. At a word, I am not.

Urs. I know you by the waggling of your head.

Ant. To tell you true, I counterfeit him.

Urs. You could never do him so ill-well, unless you were the very man: Here's his dry hand up and down;[6] you are he, you are he.

Ant. At a word, I am not.

Urs. Come, come; do you think I do not know you by your excellent wit? Can virtue hide itself? Go to, mum, you are he: graces will appear, and there's an end.

Beat. Will you not tell me who told you so?

Bene. No, you shall pardon me.

Beat. Nor will you not tell me who you are?

Bene. Not now.

Beat. That I was disdainful, — and that I had my good wit out of The Hundred Merry Tales;[7]

[6] So, in The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act ii. sc. 3, Launce says, "Here's my mother's breath *up and down.*" The phrase apparently means *exactly, precisely;* something like those of our time, *out and out, all over, to a t.* H.

[7] This was the term for a *jest-book* in Shakespeare's time, from a popular collection of that name, about which the commentators were much puzzled, until a large fragment was discovered in 1815, by the Rev. J. Conybeare, Professor of Poetry in Oxford. It was printed by Rastell, and therefore must have been published previous to 1533. Another collection of the same kind, called Tales and Quicke Answeres, printed by Berthelette, and of nearly equal antiquity, was also reprinted at the same time; and it is remarkable that this collection is cited by Sir John Harrington under the title of The Hundred Merry Tales. It continued for a long period to be the popular name for collections of this sort; for in the London Chaunticlere, 1659, it is mentioned as being cried for sale by a ballad man.

— Well, this was signior Benedick that said so.

Bene. What's he?

Beat. I am sure you know him well enough.

Bene. Not I, believe me.

Beat. Did he never make you laugh?

Bene. I pray you, what is he?

Beat. Why, he is the prince's jester: a very dull fool; only his gift is in devising impossible slanders: none but libertines delight in him; and the commendation is not in his wit, but in his villany; for he both pleaseth men, and angers them, and then they laugh at him, and beat him: I am sure he is in the fleet; I would he had boarded[8] me.

Bene. When I know the gentleman, I'll tell him what you say.

Beat. Do, do; he'll but break a comparison or two on me; which, peradventure, not mark'd, or not laugh'd at, strikes him into melancholy; and then there's a partridge wing saved, for the fool will eat no supper that night. [*Music within.*] We must follow the leaders.

Bene. In every good thing.

Beat. Nay, if they lead to any ill, I will leave them at the next turning.

[*Dance. Then exeunt all but* JOHN, BORACHIO, *and* CLAUDIO.

John. Sure, my brother is amorous on Hero, and hath withdrawn her father to break with him about it: The ladies follow her, and but one visor remains.

Bora. And that is Claudio; I know him by his bearing.[9]

John. Are not you signior Benedick?

[8] *Boarded*, besides its usual meaning, signified *accosted*.

[9] Carriage, demeanour.

Claud. You know me well: I am he.

John. Signior, you are very near my brother in his love: he is enamour'd on Hero. I pray you dissuade him from her; she is no equal for his birth: you may do the part of an honest man in it.

Claud. How know you he loves her?

John. I heard him swear his affection.

Bora. So did I too; and he swore he would marry her to-night.

John. Come, let us to the banquet.

[*Exeunt* JOHN *and* BORACHIO

Claud. Thus answer I in name of Benedick,
But hear these ill news with the ears of Claudio.—
'Tis certain so:—the prince woos for himself.
Friendship is constant in all other things,
Save in the office and affairs of love:
Therefore,[10] all hearts in love use their own tongues,
Let every eye negotiate for itself,
And trust no agent; for beauty is a witch,
Against whose charms faith melteth into blood.[11]
This is an accident of hourly proof,
Which I mistrusted not: Farewell, therefore, Hero!

Re-enter BENEDICK.

Bene. Count Claudio?

Claud. Yea, the same.

Bene. Come, will you go with me?

Claud. Whither?

Bene. Even to the next willow, about your own business, count. What fashion will you wear the garland of? About your neck, like an usurer's

[10] *Let*, which is found in the next line, is understood here.

[11] *Blood* signifies *amorous heat* or *passion*. So, in All's Well that Ends Well, Act iii. sc. 7: "Now his important *blood* will nought deny, that she'll demand."

chain,[12] or under your arm, like a lieutenant's scarf? You must wear it one way, for the prince hath got your Hero.

Claud. I wish him joy of her.

Bene. Why, that's spoken like an honest drover; so they sell bullocks. But did you think the prince would have served you thus?

Claud. I pray you, leave me.

Bene. Ho! now you strike like the blind man: 'twas the boy that stole your meat, and you'll beat the post.

Claud. If it will not be, I'll leave you. [*Exit.*

Bene. Alas, poor hurt fowl! Now will he creep into sedges. — But, that my lady Beatrice should know me, and not know me! The prince's fool! Ha! it may be I go under that title, because I am merry. Yea; but so I am apt to do myself wrong. — I am not so reputed: it is the base though bitter disposition of Beatrice, that puts the world into her person, and so gives me out.[13] Well, I'll be revenged as I may.

Re-enter Don PEDRO.

D. Pedro. Now, signior, where's the count? Did you see him?

Bene. Troth, my lord, I have played the part of lady Fame. I found him here as melancholy as a

[12] Chains of gold of considerable value were in Shakespeare's time worn by wealthy citizens and others, in the same manner as they are now on public occasions by the aldermen of London. Usury was then a common topic of invective. So, in The Choice of Change, 1598: "Three sortes of people, in respect of necessity, may be accounted good: — *Merchants*, for they may play the *usurers*, instead of the Jews." Again, "There is a scarcity of Jews, because Christians make an occupation of *usurie*."

[13] That is, who takes upon herself to personate the world, and so fancies that the world thinks us as she does. It nearly a

lodge in a warren: [14] I told him, and I think I told him true, that your grace had got the good will of this young lady; and I offered him my company to a willow tree, either to make him a garland, as being forsaken, or to bind him up a rod, as being worthy to be whipp'd.

D. Pedro. To be whipp'd! What's his fault?

Bene. The flat transgression of a schoolboy, who, being overjoyed with finding a bird's nest, shows it his companion, and he steals it.

D. Pedro. Wilt thou make a trust a trangression? The transgression is in the stealer.

Bene. Yet it had not been amiss, the rod had been made, and the garland too: for the garland he might have worn himself; and the rod he might have bestowed on you, who, as I take it, have stol'n his bird's nest.

D. Pedro. I will but teach them to sing, and restore them to the owner.

Bene. If their singing answer your saying, by my faith, you say honestly.

D. Pedro. The lady Beatrice hath a quarrel to you: the gentleman, that danc'd with her, told her she is much wrong'd by you.

Bene. O! she misus'd me past the endurance of a block: an oak, but with one green leaf on it, would have answered her: my very visor began to assume life, and scold with her: She told me, not thinking I had been myself, that I was the prince's

modern editions, *the base though bitter disposition* is changed to *the base, the bitter disposition;* probably because the editors could discover no antithesis between *base* and *bitter*. Perhaps they would have seen the appropriateness of *though*, had they but understood *bitter* in the sense of *sharp, witty, satirical.* H.

[14] A similar image of loneliness occurs in Measure for Measure "At the moated grange resides this dejected Mariana" H

jester, and that I was duller than a great thaw; huddling jest upon jest, with such impossible[15] conveyance, upon me, that I stood like a man at a mark, with a whole army shooting at me. She speaks poniards, and every word stabs: if her breath were as terrible as her terminations, there were no living near her; she would infect to the north star. I would not marry her, though she were endowed with all that Adam had left him before he transgress'd: she would have made Hercules have turn'd spit; yea, and have cleft his club to make the fire too. Come, talk not of her; you shall find her the infernal Até in good apparel.[16] I would to God some scholar would conjure her; for, certainly, while she is here, a man may live as quiet in hell as in a sanctuary; and people sin upon purpose, because they would go thither: so, indeed, all disquiet, horror, and perturbation follow her.

Re-enter CLAUDIO, BEATRICE, HERO, *and* LEONATO.

D. Pedro. Look, here she comes.

Bene. Will your grace command me any service to the world's end? I will go on the slightest errand now to the Antipodes, that you can devise to send me on: I will fetch you a toothpicker now from the farthest inch of Asia; bring you the length

[15] That is, "with a rapidity equal to that of jugglers," whose *conveyances* or tricks appear *impossibilities*. *Impossible* may, however, be used in the sense of *incredible* or *inconceivable*, both here and in the beginning of the scene, where Beatrice speaks of "*impossible* slanders."

[16] Upon this passage Warburton remarks, and Collier endorses him, that "the ancient poets and painters represent the *Furies in rags*. Até, however, was not a Fury, but the daughter of Jupiter and goddess of mischief and discord. H.

of Prester John's foot;[17] fetch you a hair of the great Cham's beard; do you any embassage to the Pigmies, rather than hold three words' conference with this harpy: You have no employment for me?

D. Pedro. None, but to desire your good company.

Bene. O God! sir, here's a dish I love not: I cannot endure my lady Tongue. [*Exit.*

D. Pedro. Come, lady, come; you have lost the heart of signior Benedick.

Beat. Indeed, my lord, he lent it me a while; and I gave him use[18] for it, a double heart for his single one: marry, once before he won it of me with false dice; therefore your grace may well say I have lost it.

D. Pedro. You have put him down, lady; you have put him down.

Beat. So I would not he should do me, my lord, lest I should prove the mother of fools. I have brought count Claudio, whom you sent me to seek.

D. Pedro. Why, how now, count! wherefore are you sad?

Claud. Not sad, my lord.

D. Pedro. How then? Sick?

Claud. Neither, my lord.

Beat. The count is neither sad, nor sick, nor merry, nor well; but civil, count; civil as an orange,[19] and something of that jealous complexion.

D. Pedro. I'faith, lady, I think your blazon to be

[17] How difficult this had been, may be guessed from Butler's account of that distinguished John:

"While like the mighty Prester John,
Whose person none dares look upon,
But is preserv'd in close disguise
From being made cheap to vulgar eyes." H.

[18] Interest.

[19] A quibble; alluding to the *Seville orange*, a fruit then well known in London.

true; though I'll be sworn, if he be so, his conceit is false. Here, Claudio, I have wooed in thy name, and fair Hero is won: I have broke with her father, and his good will obtained: name the day of marriage, and God give thee joy!

Leon. Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes: his grace hath made the match, and all grace say Amen to it!

Beat. Speak, count; 'tis your cue.

Claud. Silence is the perfectest herald of joy: I were but little happy, if I could say how much. — Lady, as you are mine, I am yours: I give away myself for you, and dote upon the exchange.

Beat. Speak, cousin; or, if you cannot, stop his mouth with a kiss, and let him not speak neither.

D. Pedro. In faith, lady, you have a merry heart.

Beat. Yea, my lord: I thank it, poor fool, it keeps on the windy side of care. — My cousin tells him in his ear, that he is in her heart.

Claud. And so she doth, cousin.

Beat. Good Lord, for alliance! — Thus goes every one to the world but I;[20] and I am sunburn'd: I may sit in a corner, and cry heigh-ho! for a husband.

[20] *To go to the world* is used by Shakespeare for *to get married*. Thus, in All's Well that Ends Well, Act i. sc. 3, the Clown says, — "If I may have your ladyship's good will *to go to the world*, Isabel, the woman, and I will do as we may." And in As You Like It, Act v. sc. 3, Audrey says, — "I hope it is no dishonest desire, to desire *to be a woman of the world*." — *Good Lord, for alliance!* seems to mean, — Good Lord, how matrimony prospers! Mr. Collier, however, points the passage thus: "Good Lord! for alliance thus goes every one to the world but I;" which might do very well but for the tautology it makes, the sense in that case being, "for marriage thus every one gets married but I." — *I am sun-burn'd* means, I have lost my beauty, and so am not one of Hymen's prizes. Thus, in Troilus and Cressida Act i. sc. 3: "The Grecian dames were *sun-burn'd*, and not worth the splinter of a lance."

D. Pedro. Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

Beat. I would rather have one of your father's getting: Hath your grace ne'er a brother like you? Your father got excellent husbands, if a maid could come by them.

D. Pedro. Will you have me, lady?

Beat. No, my lord, unless I might have another for working-days: your grace is too costly to wear every day: — But, I beseech your grace, pardon me: I was born to speak all mirth, and no matter.

D. Pedro. Your silence most offends me, and to be merry best becomes you; for, out of question, you were born in a merry hour.

Beat. No, sure, my lord; my mother cried; but then there was a star danc'd, and under that was I born. — Cousins, God give you joy!

Leon. Niece, will you look to those things I told you of?

Beat. I cry you mercy, uncle. — By your grace's pardon. [*Exit* BEATRICE.

D. Pedro. By my troth, a pleasant-spirited lady.

Leon. There's little of the melancholy element in her, my lord: she is never sad, but when she sleeps; and not ever sad then; for I have heard my daughter say, she hath often dream'd of unhappiness,[21] and wak'd herself with laughing.

D. Pedro. She cannot endure to hear tell of a husband.

Leon. O, by no means! she mocks all her wooers out of suit.

D. Pedro. She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

[21] That is, mischief. *Unhappy* was often used for *mischievous*, as we now say an *unlucky* boy for a *mischievous* boy. So, in All's Well that Ends Well, Act iv. sc. 5: "A shrewd knave and an *unhappy*."

Leon. O Lord! my lord, if they were but a week married, they would talk themselves mad.

D. Pedro. Count Claudio, when mean you to go to Church?

Claud. To-morrow, my lord: Time goes on crutches, till Love have all his rites.

Leon. Not till Monday, my dear son, which is hence a just seven-night: and a time too brief, too, to have all things answer my mind.

D. Pedro. Come, you shake the head at so long a breathing; but I warrant thee, Claudio, the time shall not go dully by us: I will in the interim undertake one of Hercules' labours; which is, to bring signior Benedick and the lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection, the one with the other. I would fain have it a match; and I doubt not but to fashion it, if you three will but minister such assistance as I shall give you direction.

Leon. My lord, I am for you, though it cost me ten nights' watchings.

Claud. And I, my lord.

D. Pedro. And you too, gentle Hero?

Hero. I will do any modest office, my lord, to help my cousin to a good husband.

D. Pedro. And Benedick is not the unhopefullest husband that I know: Thus far can I praise him: He is of a noble strain,[22] of approved valour, and

[22] *Strain*, sometimes spelt *strene*, means *stock, lineage, descent*, from the Anglo-Saxon *strind*, and another word than *strain*, from the German *strengen*. Thus Spenser has,—"Sprung of the auncient stocke of princes *straine*." Again,—"For that same Beast was bred of hellish *strene*." And he speaks of "sacred Reverence yborne of heavenly *strene*." The word occurs several times in Shakespeare. Thus in Henry V., Act ii. sc. 4:

> "And he 's bred out of that bloody *strain*
> That haunted us in our familiar paths." H.

confirm'd honesty. I will teach you how to humour your cousin, that she shall fall in love with Benedick; — and I, with your two helps, will so practise on Benedick, that, in despite of his quick wit and his queasy stomach, he shall fall in love with Beatrice. If we can do this, Cupid is no longer an archer: his glory shall be ours, for we are the only love-gods. Go in with me, and I will tell you my drift. [*Exeunt*

SCENE II. Another Room in Leonato's House

Enter John *and* Borachio.

John. It is so: the count Claudio shall marry the daughter of Leonato.

Bora. Yea, my lord; but I can cross it.

John. Any bar, any cross, any impediment will be medicinable to me: I am sick in displeasure to him; and whatsoever comes athwart his affection ranges evenly with mine. How canst thou cross this marriage?

Bora. Not honestly, my lord; but so covertly that no dishonesty shall appear in me.

John. Show me briefly how.

Bora. I think I told your lordship, a year since, how much I am in the favour of Margaret, the waiting-gentlewoman to Hero.

John. I remember.

Bora. I can, at any unseasonable instant of the night, appoint her to look out at her lady's chamber-window.

John. What life is in that to be the death of this marriage?

Bora. The poison of that lies in you to temper. Go you to the prince your brother: spare not to

tell him that he hath wronged his honour in marrying the renowned Claudio (whose estimation do you mightily hold up) to a contaminated stale,[1] such a one as Hero.

John. What proof shall I make of that ?

Bora. Proof enough to misuse the prince, to vex Claudio, to undo Hero, and kill Leonato: Look you for any other issue ?

John. Only to despite them, I will endeavour any thing.

Bora. Go then; find me a meet hour to draw Don Pedro and the count Claudio alone: tell them that you know that Hero loves me; intend[2] a kind of zeal both to the prince and Claudio, as — in love of your brother's honour, who hath made this match, and his friend's reputation, who is thus like to be cozen'd with the semblance of a maid — that you have discover'd thus. They will scarcely believe this without trial: offer them instances; which shall bear no less likelihood, than to see me at her chamber-window; hear me call Margaret Hero; hear Margaret term me Claudio:[3] and bring them to see this, the very night before the intended wed-

[1] Shakespeare uses *stale* here, and in a subsequent scene, for *an abandoned woman.* A *stale* also meant a *decoy* or *lure*, but the two words had different origins. It is obvious why the term was applied to prostitutes.

[2] Pretend.

[3] So in all the old copies. Theobald thought it should read *Borachio* instead of Claudio; whereas the expression, *term me*, infers that a false name is to be agreed upon between the speaker and Margaret. Both Claudio and the Prince might well be persuaded that Hero received a clandestine lover, whom she *called* Claudio, in order to deceive her attendants, should any be within hearing; and this they would of course deem an aggravation of her offence. It is hardly worth the while to add, that *they* would be in no danger of supposing the man, whom Margaret *termed* Claudio, to be Claudio in fact. It seems strange that so much ink should have been thrown away on so plain a matter. H

ding; for in the mean time I will so fashion the matter, that Hero shall be absent; and there shall appear such seeming truth of Hero's disloyalty, that jealousy shall be call'd assurance, and all the preparation overthrown.

John. Grow this to what adverse issue it can, I will put it in practice: Be cunning in the working this, and thy fee is a thousand ducats.

Bora. Be you constant in the accusation, and my cunning shall not shame me.

John. I will presently go learn their day of marriage. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. Leonato's Garden.

Enter Benedick.[1]

Bene. Boy!

Enter a Boy.

Boy. Signior.

Bene. In my chamber-window lies a book; bring it hither to me in the orchard.[2]

Boy. I am here, already, sir.

Bene. I know that; — but I would have thee hence, and here again. [*Exit Boy.*] — I do much wonder that one man, seeing how much another

[1] In the original, both quarto and folio, the stage direction here is, "Enter Benedick alone;" in all modern editions till Mr. Collier's it is, "Enter Benedick and a Boy." The original is probably right, the design being that Benedick shall be seen pacing to and fro, ruminating and digesting the matter of his forthcoming soliloquy. In this state his mind gets so deep in philosophy, that he wants a book to feed the appetite which passing events have awakened. Of course the boy comes when called for. H.

[2] *Orchard* in Shakespeare's time signified a *garden*. So, in Romeo and Juliet: "The orchard walls are high and hard to climb." This word was first written *hort-yard*, then by corruption *hortchard*, and hence orchard.

man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviours to love, will, after he hath laugh'd at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn by falling in love; and such a man is Claudio. I have known when there was no music with him but the drum and the fife; and now had he rather hear the tabor and the pipe: I have known when he would have walk'd ten mile afoot, to see a good armour; and now will he lie ten nights awake, carving the fashion of a new doublet.[3] He was wont to speak plain, and to the purpose, like an honest man and a soldier; and now is he turn'd orthographer: his words are a very fantastical banquet, just so many strange dishes. May I be so converted, and see with these eyes? I cannot tell; I think not: I will not be sworn, but love may transform me to an oyster; but I'll take my oath on it, till he have made an oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool. One woman is fair; yet I am well: another is wise; yet I am well: another virtuous; yet I am well: but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace. Rich she shall be, that's certain; wise, or I'll none; virtuous, or I'll never cheapen her; fair, or I'll never look on her; mild, or come not near me; noble, or not I for an angel; of good discourse, an excellent musician, and her hair shall be of what colour it please God.[4] Ha! the prince and monsieur Love! I will hide me in the arbour. [*Withdraws*

[3] This folly is the theme of all comic satire. In Barnabe Riche's Faults and Nothing but Faults, 1606, "The fashionmonger that spends his time in the contemplation of suites" is said to have "a sad and heavy countenance," because his tailor "hath cut his new sute after the olde stampe of some stale fashion that is at the least of a whole fortnight's standing."

[4] Disguises of false hair and of dyed hair were quite common.

Enter Don PEDRO, LEONATO, *and* CLAUDIO.

D. Pedro. Come, shall we hear this music?

Claud. Yea, my good lord: — How still the evening is,
As hush'd on purpose to grace harmony!

D. Pedro. See you where Benedick hath hid himself?

Claud. O! very well, my lord: the music ended,
We'll fit the kid-fox [5] with a penny-worth.

Enter BALTHAZAR, *with musicians.*

D. Pedro. Come, Balthazar, we'll hear that song again.

Balth. O! good my lord, tax not so bad a voice
To slander music any more than once.

D. Pedro. It is the witness still of excellency,
To put a strange face on his own perfection: —
I pray thee, sing, and let me woo no more.

Balth. Because you talk of wooing, I will sing
Since many a wooer doth commence his suit

especially among the ladies, in Shakespeare's time; scarce any of them being so richly dowered with other gifts as to be content with the hair which it had pleased Nature to bestow. The Poet has several passages going to show that this custom was not much in favour with him; as in Love's Labour's Lost, Act iv. sc. 3 where Biron "mourns that painting and usurping hair should ravish doters with a false aspect." That in this as in other things his mind went with Nature, further appears from his making so sensible a fellow as Benedick talk that way. H.

[5] A deal of learned, but, as it would seem, not very wise ink has been shed about this little innocent word. Some editors print it *hid-fox;* others say *kid* means *discovered* or *detected*, there being an old word, *kith*, *kid*, with that meaning; as in John Skelton's Image of Ypocresy: "The truth cannot be hid, for it is plain *kid*." Probably there need be no scruple about taking the word to mean a *young fox*. Richardson quotes it as such in his Dictionary. H.

To her he thinks not worthy; yet he woos,
Yet will he swear, he loves.

D. Pedro. Nay, pray thee, come:
Or, if thou wilt hold longer argument,
Do it in notes.

Balth. Note this before my notes,
There's not a note of mine that's worth the noting.

D. Pedro. Why, these are very crotchets that he speaks;
Note, notes, forsooth, and nothing! [*Music.*

Bene. [*Aside.*] Now, divine air! now is his soul ravished! — Is it not strange, that sheep's guts should hale souls out of men's bodies?[6] — Well, a horn for my money, when all's done.

The Song.

I.

Balth. Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers ever;
One foot in sea, and one on shore,
To one thing constant never:
Then sigh not so,
But let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny;
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into, Hey nonny, nonny.

II.

Sing no more ditties, sing no mo
Of dumps so dull and heavy;
The fraud of men was ever so,
Since summer first was leavy:
Then sigh not so, &c.

[6] A similar tribute to the power of music occurs in Twelfth Night, Act ii. sc. 3, only it is there spoken of as able to "draw three souls out of one weaver." H.

D. Pedro. By my troth, a good song.

Balth. And an ill singer, my lord.

D. Pedro. Ha? no, no; faith, thou singest well enough for a shift.

Bene. [*Aside.*] An he had been a dog, that should have howl'd thus, they would have hang'd him: and I pray God his bad voice bode no mischief! I had as lief have heard the night-raven,[7] come what plague could have come after it.

D. Pedro. Yea, marry; dost thou hear, Balthazar? I pray thee, get us some excellent music; for to-morrow night we would have it at the lady Hero's chamber-window.

Balth. The best I can, my lord.

D. Pedro. Do so: farewell. [*Exeunt* BALTHAZAR *and musicians.*] Come hither, Leonato: What was it you told me of to-day? that your niece Beatrice was in love with signior Benedick?

Claud. [*Aside to Pedro.*] O, ay: — Stalk on, stalk on;[8] the fowl sits. — [*Aloud.*] I did never think that lady would have loved any man.

Leon. No, nor I neither; but most wonderful, that she should so dote on signior Benedick, whom she hath in all outward behaviours seemed ever to abhor.

[7] That is, the owl; νυκτικοραξ. So, in 3 Henry VI.: "The *night-crow* cried, aboding luckless time." Thus also Milton, in L'Allegro: "And the *night-raven* sings."

[8] An allusion to the *stalking-horse*, whereby the fowler anciently screened himself from the sight of the game. It is thus described in John Gee's New Shreds of the Old Snare: "Methinks I behold the cunning fowler, such as I have known in the fen-countries and elsewhere, that do shoot at woodcocks, snipes, and wild-fowl, by sneaking behind a painted cloth which they carry before them, having pictured on it the shape of a horse; which while the silly fowl gazeth on, it is knocked down with hail shot and so put into the fowler's budget.' H.

Bene. [*Aside.*] Is't possible? Sits the wind in that corner?

Leon. By my troth, my lord, I cannot tell what to think of it, but that she loves him with an enraged affection: — it is past the infinite of thought.

D. Pedro. May be, she doth but counterfeit.

Claud. 'Faith, like enough.

Leon. O God! counterfeit! There never was counterfeit of passion came so near the life of passion, as she discovers it.

D. Pedro. Why, what effects of passion shows she?

Claud. [*Aside.*] Bait the hook well; this fish will bite.

Leon. What effects, my lord! She will sit you, — you heard my daughter tell you how.

Claud. She did, indeed.

D. Pedro. How, how, I pray you? You amaze me: I would have thought her spirit had been invincible against all assaults of affection.

Leon. I would have sworn it had, my lord; especially against Benedick.

Bene. [*Aside.*] I should think this a gull, but that the white-bearded fellow speaks it: knavery cannot, sure, hide himself in such reverence.

Claud. [*Aside.*] He hath ta'en the infection; hold it up.

D. Pedro. Hath she made her affection known to Benedick?

Leon. No, and swears she never will; that's her torment.

Claud. 'Tis true, indeed; so your daughter says: "Shall I," says she, "that have so oft encounter'd him with scorn, write to him that I love him?"

Leon. This says she now when she is beginning

to write to him: for she'll be up twenty times a night; and there will she sit in her smock, till she have writ a sheet of paper: — My daughter tells us all.

Claud. Now you talk of a sheet of paper, I remember a pretty jest your daughter told us of.

Leon. O! — When she had writ it, and was reading it over, she found Benedick and Beatrice between the sheet? —

Claud. That.

Leon. O! she tore the letter into a thousand half pence;[9] rail'd at herself, that she should be so immodest to write to one that she knew would flout her: — "I measure him," says she, "by my own spirit; for I should flout him, if he writ to me; yea, though I love him, I should."

Claud. Then down upon her knees she falls, weeps, sobs, beats her heart, tears her hair, prays, cries; — "O sweet Benedick! God give me patience!"

Leon. She doth indeed; my daughter says so. and the ecstasy hath so much overborne her, that my daughter is sometime afraid she will do a desperate outrage to herself: It is very true.

D. Pedro. It were good that Benedick knew of it by some other, if she will not discover it.

Claud. To what end? He would but make a sport of it, and torment the poor lady worse.

D. Pedro. An he should, it were an alms to hang him: She's an excellent sweet lady; and out of all suspicion she is virtuous.

Claud. And she is exceeding wise.

[9] That is, into a thousand *small pieces*; it should be remembered that the *silver* halfpence, which were then current, were very minute pieces

D. Pedro. In every thing but in loving Benedick.

Leon. O! my lord, wisdom and blood combating in so tender a body, we have ten proofs to one, that blood hath the victory. I am sorry for her, as I have just cause, being her uncle and her guardian.

D. Pedro. I would she had bestowed this dotage on me; I would have daff'd [10] all other respects, and made her half myself: I pray you, tell Benedick of it, and hear what he will say.

Leon. Were it good, think you?

Claud. Hero thinks surely she will die: for she says she will die if he love her not; and she will die ere she make her love known; and she will die if he woo her, rather than she will 'bate one breath of her accustomed crossness.

D. Pedro. She doth well: if she should make tender of her love, 'tis very possible he'll scorn it; for the man, as you know all, hath a contemptible [11] spirit.

Claud. He is a very proper man.

D. Pedro. He hath, indeed, a good outward happiness.

Claud. 'Fore God, and in my mind very wise.

D. Pedro. He doth, indeed, show some sparks that are like wit.

Leon. And I take him to be valiant.

D. Pedro. As Hector, I assure you: and in the managing of quarrels you may say he is wise; for either he avoids them with great discretion, or undertakes them with a most Christian-like fear.

Leon. If he do fear God, he must necessarily

[10] To *daff* is the same as to *do off*, to *doff*, to put aside.

[11] That is, contemptuous. The active and passive adjectives were often used indiscriminately. S.

keep peace: if he break the peace, he ought to enter into a quarrel with fear and trembling

D. Pedro. And so will he do; for the man doth fear God, howsoever it seems not in him by some large jests he will make. Well, I am sorry for your niece: Shall we go seek Benedick, and tell him of her love?

Claud. Never tell him, my lord: let her wear it out with good counsel.

Leon. Nay, that's impossible; she may wear her heart out first.

D. Pedro. Well, we will hear further of it by your daughter: let it cool the while. I love Benedick well; and I could wish he would modestly examine himself, to see how much he is unworthy to have so good a lady.

Leon. My lord, will you walk? dinner is ready.

Claud. [*Aside.*] If he do not dote on her upon this, I will never trust my expectation.

D. Pedro. [*Aside.*] Let there be the same net spread for her; and that must your daughter and her gentlewomen carry. The sport will be, when they hold one an opinion of another's dotage, and no such matter; that's the scene that I would see, which will be merely a dumb show. Let us send her to call him in to dinner.

[*Exeunt Don* PEDRO, CLAUDIO, *and* LEONATO.

Bene. [*Advancing from the arbour.*] This can be no trick: The conference was sadly borne.[12] — They have the truth of this from Hero. They seem to pity the lady: it seems, her affections have their full bent. Love me! why, it must be requited I hear how I am censur'd: they say I will bear myself proudly, if I perceive the love come from

[12] Seriously carried on.

her: they say, too, that she will rather die than give any sign of affection. — I did never think to marry: — I must not seem proud. — Happy are they that hear their detractions, and can put them to mending. They say the lady is fair; 'tis a truth, I can bear them witness: and virtuous; 'tis so, I cannot reprove it: and wise, but for loving me: — by my troth, it is no addition to her wit; — nor no great argument of her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her. I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me, because I have rail'd so long against marriage: — But doth not the appetite alter? A man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot endure in his age. Shall quips, and sentences, and these paper bullets of the brain, awe a man from the career of his humour? No: The world must be peopled. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married. — Here comes Beatrice: By this day, she's a fair lady: I do spy some marks of love in her.

Enter BEATRICE.

Beat. Against my will, I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

Bene. Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.

Beat. I took no more pains for those thanks, than you take pains to thank me: if it had been painful, I would not have come.

Bene. You take pleasure, then, in the message?

Beat. Yea, just so much as you may take upon a knife's point, and choke a daw withal: — You have no stomach, signior? fare you well. [*Exit.*

Bene. Ha! "Against my will, I am sent to bid you come in to dinner;" — there's a double meaning

in that. "I took no more pains for those thanks, than you took pains to thank me;" — that's as much as to say, Any pains that I take for you is as easy as thanks. — If I do not take pity of her, I am a villain; if I do not love her, I am a Jew: I will go get her picture. [*Exit*

ACT III.

SCENE I. Leonato's Garden.

Enter Hero, Margaret, *and* Ursula.

Hero. Good Margaret, run thee to the parlour,
There shalt thou find my cousin Beatrice
Proposing[1] with the prince and Claudio:
Whisper her ear, and tell her I and Ursula
Walk in the orchard, and our whole discourse
Is all of her: say, that thou overheard'st us;
And bid her steal into the pleached bower,
Where honey-suckles, ripen'd by the sun,
Forbid the sun to enter; like favourites,
Made proud by princes, that advance their pride
Against that power that bred it: — There will she hide her,
To listen our propose. This is thy office;
Bear thee well in it, and leave us alone.

[1] This is from the French *propos*, signifying talk, conversation. A few lines below we have the noun, "to listen our *propose*," bearing the same sense. In the latter case the folio reads *purpose*; but here, as in almost every instance where the two copies differ, the reading of the quarto seems preferable. H.

Marg. I'll make her come, I warrant you, presently. [*Exit.*

Hero. Now, Ursula, when Beatrice doth come,
As we do trace this alley up and down,
Our talk must only be of Benedick:
When I do name him, let it be thy part
To praise him more than ever man did merit.
My talk to thee must be, how Benedick
Is sick in love with Beatrice: Of this matter
Is little Cupid's crafty arrow made,
That only wounds by hearsay. Now begin;

Enter BEATRICE, *behind.*

For look where Beatrice, like a lapwing, runs
Close by the ground, to hear our conference.

Urs. The pleasant'st angling is to see the fish
Cut with their golden oars the silver stream,
And greedily devour the treacherous bait:
So angle we for Beatrice; who even now
Is couched in the woodbine coverture:
Fear you not my part of the dialogue.

Hero. Then go we near her, that her ear lose nothing
Of the false sweet bait, that we lay for it. —
No, truly, Ursula, she is too disdainful;
I know her spirits are as coy and wild
As haggards of the rock.[2]

Urs. But are you sure,
That Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely?

Hero. So says the prince, and my new-trothed lord.

Urs. And did they bid you tell her of it, madam?

[2] The haggard is a wild hawk. Latham, in his Book of Falconry, says, — "Such is the greatness of her spirit, *she will not admit of any society* until such a time as nature worketh." See Twelfth Night, Act iii. sc. 1, note 6.

Hero. They did entreat me to acquaint her of it,
But I persuaded them, if they lov'd Benedick,
To wish him wrestle with affection,
And never to let Beatrice know of it.

Urs. Why did you so? Doth not the gentleman
Deserve as full, as fortunate a bed,
As ever Beatrice shall couch upon?

Hero. O, God of love! I know he doth deserve
As much as may be yielded to a man;
But nature never fram'd a woman's heart
Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice:
Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes,
Misprising what they look on; and her wit
Values itself so highly, that to her
All matter else seems weak: She cannot love,
Nor take no shape nor project of affection,
She is so self-endeared.

Urs. Sure, I think so;
And therefore, certainly, it were not good
She knew his love, lest she make sport at it.

Hero. Why, you speak truth: I never yet saw man,
How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featur'd,
But she would spell him backward:[3] if fair-fac'd,
She would swear the gentleman should be her sister:
If black, why, Nature, drawing of an antic,
Made a foul blot:[4] if tall, a lance ill-headed:
If low, an agate very vilely cut:[5]

[3] That is, *misinterpret* him. An allusion to the practice of witches in uttering prayers. In like sort, we often say of a man who refuses to take things in their plain natural meaning, as if he were on the lookout for some cheat,—"He reads every thing backwards." H.

[4] A *black* man here means a man with a dark or thick beard, which is the *blot* in nature's drawing. The *antic* was the fool or buffoon of the old farces.

[5] An *agate* is often used metaphorically for a very diminutive

If speaking, why, a vane blown with all winds:
If silent, why, a block moved with none.
So turns she every man the wrong side out;
And never gives to truth and virtue that
Which simpleness and merit purchaseth.

Urs. Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable.

Hero. No; not to be so odd, and from all fashions,
As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable:
But who dare tell her so? If I should speak,
She would mock me into air: O! she would laugh me
Out of myself, press me to death with wit.[6]
Therefore let Benedick, like cover'd fire,
Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly:
It were a better death than die with mocks,
Which is as bad as die with tickling.[7]

Urs. Yet tell her of it: hear what she will say.

Hero. No; rather I will go to Benedick,
And counsel him to fight against his passion:
And, truly, I'll devise some honest slanders
To stain my cousin with: One doth not know
How much an ill word may empoison liking.

Urs. O! do not do your cousin such a wrong.
She cannot be so much without true judgment,
(Having so swift and excellent a wit,
As she is priz'd to have,) as to refuse
So rare a gentleman as signior Benedick.

Hero. He is the only man of Italy,
Always excepted my dear Claudio.

person, in allusion to the figures cut in agate for rings. Queen Mab is described "in shape no bigger than an *agate stone* on the forefinger of an alderman."

[6] The allusion is to an ancient punishment inflicted on those who refused to plead to an indictment. If they continued silent, they were pressed to death by heavy weights laid on their stomach.

[7] This word is intended to be pronounced as a trisyllable; it was sometimes written *tickeling*.

Urs. I pray you, be not angry with me, madam,
Speaking my fancy: signior Benedick,
For shape, for bearing, argument,[8] and valour,
Goes foremost in report through Italy.

Hero. Indeed, he hath an excellent good name.

Urs. His excellence did earn it, ere he had it. —
When are you married, madam?

Hero. Why, every day; — to-morrow. Come, go in:
I'll show thee some attires; and have thy counsel,
Which is the best to furnish me to-morrow.

Urs. [*Aside.*] She's lim'd[9] I warrant you; we have caught her, madam.

Hero. [*Aside.*] If it prove so, then loving goes by haps:
Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps.
[*Exeunt* HERO *and* URSULA.

Beat. [*Advancing.*] What fire is in mine ears? [10] Can this be true?
Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorn so much?
Contempt, farewell! and maiden pride, adieu!
No glory lives behind the back of such.
And, Benedick, love on: I will requite thee,
Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand.[11]
If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee
To bind our loves up in a holy band:
For others say thou dost deserve, and I
Believe it better than reportingly. [*Exit*

[8] Conversation.

[9] That is, ensnared and entangled, as a sparrow with bird lime.

[10] Alluding to the proverbial saying, which is as old as Pliny's time, "That when our *ears do glow and tingle*, some there be that in our absence do talke of us."

[11] This image is taken from falconry. She has been charged with being as wild as *haggards of the rock*; she therefore says, that wild as her heart is, she will *tame* it *to the hand*.

SCENE II. A Room in Leonato's House.

Enter Don Pedro, Claudio, Benedick, *and* Leonato.

D. Pedro. I do but stay till your marriage be consummate, and then go I toward Arragon.

Claud. I'll bring you thither, my lord, if you'll vouchsafe me.

D. Pedro. Nay, that would be as great a soil in the new gloss of your marriage, as to show a child his new coat, and forbid him to wear it. I will only be bold with Benedick for his company: for, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, he is all mirth; he hath twice or thrice cut Cupid's bow string, and the little hangman[1] dare not shoot at him: he hath a heart as sound as a bell, and his tongue is the clapper; for what his heart thinks, his tongue speaks.

Bene. Gallants, I am not as I have been.

Leon. So say I: methinks you are sadder.

Claud. I hope he be in love.

D. Pedro. Hang him, truant; there's no true drop of blood in him, to be truly touch'd with love: if he be sad, he wants money.

Bene. I have the tooth-ache.[2]

D. Pedro. Draw it.

Bene. Hang it!

Claud. You must hang it first, and draw it after wards.

[1] That is, executioner, slayer of hearts.

[2] So, in The False One, by Beaumont and Fletcher:

"O! this sounds mangily,
Poorly, and scurvily, in a soldier's mouth;
You had best be troubled with the *tooth-ache* too,
For lovers ever are."

D. Pedro. What! sigh for the tooth-ache?

Leon. Where is but a humour, or a worm?

Bene. Well, every one can master a grief, but he that has it.

Claud. Yet say I, he is in love.

D. Pedro. There is no appearance of fancy[3] in him, unless it be a fancy that he hath to strange disguises; as, to be a Dutchman to-day, a Frenchman to-morrow, or in the shape of two countries at once;[4] as, a German from the waist downward, all slops;[5] and a Spaniard from the hip upward, no doublet: Unless he have a fancy to this foolery, as it appears he hath, he is no fool for fancy, as you would have it to appear he is.

Claud. If he be not in love with some woman, there is no believing old signs: a' brushes his hat o' mornings; what should that bode?

D. Pedro. Hath any man seen him at the barber's?

Claud. No, but the barber's man hath been seen with him; and the old ornament of his cheek hath already stuff'd tennis-balls.

Leon. Indeed, he looks younger than he did, by the loss of a beard.

[3] A play upon the word *fancy*, which Shakespeare uses for *love*, as well as for *humour*, *caprice*, or *affectation*.

[4] So, in The Seven Deadly Sinnes of London, by Dekker, 1606: "For an Englishman's sute is like a traitor's body that hath beene hanged, drawne, and quartered, and is set up in several places: his codpiece, in Denmarke; the collar of his dublet and the belly, in France; the wing and narrow sleeve, in Italy; the short waste hangs over a botcher's stall in Utrich; his huge sloppes speak Spanish; Polonia gives him the bootes, &c.—and thus we mocke everie nation for keeping one fashion, yet steale patches from everie of them to piece out our pride; and are now laughing stocks to them, because their cut so scurvily becomes us."

[5] Large, loose breeches or trousers. Hence a *slop*-seller for one who furnishes seamen, &c., with clothes.

D. Pedro. Nay, a' rubs himself with civet: Can you smell him out by that?

Claud. That's as much as to say, The sweet youth's in love.

D. Pedro. The greatest note of it is his melancholy.

Claud. And when was he wont to wash his face?

D. Pedro. Yea, or to paint himself? for the which I hear what they say of him.

Claud. Nay, but his jesting spirit; which is now crept into a lutestring,[6] and now govern'd by stops.

D. Pedro. Indeed, that tells a heavy tale for him: Conclude, conclude, he is in love.

Claud. Nay, but I know who loves him.

D. Pedro. That would I know too: I warrant, one that knows him not.

Claud. Yes, and his ill conditions; and, in despite of all, dies for him.

D. Pedro. She shall be buried with her face upwards.[7]

Bene. Yet is this no charm for the tooth-ache.—Old signior, walk aside with me: I have studied eight or nine wise words to speak to you, which these hobby-horses must not hear.

[*Exeunt* BENEDICK *and* LEONATO.

D. Pedro. For my life, to break with him about Beatrice.

Claud. 'Tis even so: Hero and Margaret have by this played their parts with Beatrice; and then

[6] *Love-songs*, in Shakespeare's time, were sung to the lute. So, in 1 Henry IV.: "As melancholy as an old lion, or a *lover's lute*."

[7] That is, in her lover's arms. So, in The Winter's Tale:

"*Flo.* What! like a corse?

Per. No, like a bank for love to lie and play on;
Not like a corse:—or if,—not to be *buried*
But quick and in my arms."

the two bears will not bite one another when they meet.

Enter JOHN.

John. My lord and brother, God save you!

D. Pedro. Good den,[8] brother.

John. If your leisure serv'd, I would speak with you.

D. Pedro. In private?

John. If it please you:—yet count Claudio may hear; for what I would speak of concerns him.

D. Pedro. What's the matter?

John. [*To* CLAUDIO.] Means your lordship to be married to-morrow?

D. Pedro. You know he does.

John. I know not that, when he knows what I know.

Claud. If there be any impediment, I pray you discover it.

John. You may think I love you not: let that appear hereafter, and aim better at me by that I now will manifest. For my brother, I think he holds you well; and in dearness of heart hath holp to effect your ensuing marriage: surely, suit ill spent, and labour ill bestowed!

D. Pedro. Why, what's the matter?

John. I came hither to tell you; and, circumstances shorten'd, (for she hath been too long a talking of,) the lady is disloyal.

Claud. Who? Hero?

John. Even she; Leonato's Hero, your Hero, every man's Hero.

Claud. Disloyal?

[8] A colloquial abridgment of *good even*; also used for *good day*. H.

John. The word is too good to paint out her wickedness: I could say she were worse: think you of a worse title, and I will fit her to it. Wonder not till further warrant: go but with me to-night you shall see her chamber-window enter'd; even the night before her wedding-day: if you love her then, to-morrow wed her; but it would better fit your honour to change your mind.

Claud. May this be so?

D. Pedro. I will not think it.

John. If you dare not trust that you see, confess not that you know. If you will follow me, I will show you enough; and when you have seen more, and heard more, proceed accordingly.

Claud. If I see any thing to-night why I should not marry her to-morrow, in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shame her.

D. Pedro. And as I wooed for thee to obtain her, I will join with thee to disgrace her.

John. I will disparage her no farther, till you are my witnesses: bear it coldly but till midnight, and let the issue show itself.

D. Pedro. O day untowardly turned!

Claud. O mischief strangely thwarting!

John. O plague right well prevented!

So will you say, when you have seen the sequel.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. A Street.

Enter DOGBERRY *and* VERGES,[1] *with Watchmen.*

Dogb. Are you good men and true?

Verg. Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer salvation, body and soul.

[1] The first of these worthies is named from the *dog-berry*, or female cornel, a shrub that grows in every county in England *Verges* is only the provincial pronunciation of *verjuice*.

Dogb. Nay, that were a punishment too good for them, if they should have any allegiance in them, being chosen for the prince's watch.

Verg. Well, give them their charge,[2] neighbour Dogberry.

Dogb. First, who think you the most desartless man to be constable?

1 *Watch.* Hugh Oatcake, sir, or George Seacoal, for they can write and read.

Dogb. Come hither, neighbour Seacoal. God hath bless'd you with a good name: to be a well-favoured man is the gift of fortune; but to write and read comes by nature.

2 *Watch.* Both which, master constable, —

Dogb. You have; I knew it would be your answer. Well, for your favour, sir, why, give God thanks, and make no boast of it; and for your writing and reading, let that appear when there is no need of such vanity. You are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the constable of the watch; therefore bear you the lantern. This is your charge: You shall comprehend all vagrom men: you are to bid any man stand, in the prince's name.

2 *Watch.* How if a' will not stand?

Dogb. Why, then, take no note of him, but let him go; and presently call the rest of the watch together, and thank God you are rid of a knave.

Verg. If he will not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the prince's subjects.

Dogb. True, and they are to meddle with none

[2] To *charge* his fellows seems to have been a regular part of the duty of the constable. So, in A New Trick to Cheat the Devil, 1639, "My watch is set — *charge given* — and all at peace."

but the prince's subjects. — You shall also make no noise in the streets; for, for the watch to babble and talk is most tolerable, and not to be endured.

2 *Watch.* We will rather sleep than talk: we know what belongs to a watch.

Dogb. Why, you speak like an ancient and most quiet watchman; for I cannot see how sleeping should offend; only, have a care that your bills[3] be not stolen. — Well, you are to call at all the ale-houses, and bid them that are drunk get them to bed.

2 *Watch.* How, if they will not?

Dogb. Why, then, let them alone till they are sober: if they make you not then the better answer, you may say they are not the men you took them for.

2 *Watch.* Well, sir.

Dogb. If you meet a thief, you may suspect him, by virtue of your office, to be no true man; and, for such kind of men, the less you meddle or make with them, why, the more is for your honesty.

2 *Watch.* If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?

Dogb. Truly, by your office, you may; but I think they that touch pitch will be defil'd: the most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is, to let him show himself what he is, and steal out of your company.

Verg. You have been always call'd a merciful man, partner.

Dogb. Truly, I would not hang a dog by my will; much more a man who hath any honesty in him.

[3] A sort of halberd, or hatchet with a hooked point, used by watchmen. H.

Verg. If you hear a child cry in the night, you must call to the nurse, and bid her still it.

2 *Watch.* How if the nurse be asleep, and will not hear us?

Dogb. Why, then, depart in peace, and let the child wake her with crying: for the ewe that will not hear her lamb when it baas will never answer a calf when he bleats.

Verg. 'Tis very true.

Dogb. This is the end of the charge. You, constable, are to present the prince's own person; if you meet the prince in the night, you may stay him.

Verg. Nay, by'r lady, that, I think, a' cannot.

Dogb. Five shillings to one on't, with any man that knows the statues, he may stay him: marry, not without the prince be willing; for, indeed, the watch ought to offend no man; and it is an offence to stay a man against his will.

Verg. By'r lady, I think it be so.

Dogb. Ha, ha, ha! Well, masters, good night. an there be any matter of weight chances, call up me: keep your fellows' counsels and your own, and good night. — Come, neighbour.

2 *Watch.* Well, masters, we hear our charge: let us go sit here upon the church-bench till two, and then all to bed.

Dogb. One word more, honest neighbours: I pray you, watch about signior Leonato's door; for, the wedding being there to-morrow, there is a great coil to-night: Adieu; be vigitant, I beseech you.

[*Exeunt* DOGBERRY *and* VERGES

Enter BORACHIO *and* CONRADE.

Bora. What! Conrade!

Watch. [*Aside.*] Peace, stir not.

Bora. Conrade, I say!

Con. Here, man, I am at thy elbow.

Bora. Mass, and my elbow itch'd; I thought, there would a scab follow.

Con. I will owe thee an answer for that; and now forward with thy tale.

Bora. Stand thee close, then, under this pent-house, for it drizzles rain; and I will, like a true drunkard, utter all to thee.

Watch. [*Aside.*] Some treason, masters; yet stand close.

Bora. Therefore know, I have earned of Don John a thousand ducats.

Con. Is it possible that any villany should be so dear?

Bora. Thou shouldst rather ask, if it were possible any villany should be so rich; for when rich villains have need of poor ones, poor ones may make what price they will.

Con. I wonder at it.

Bora. That shows thou art unconfirm'd:[4] Thou knowest that the fashion of a doublet, or a hat, or a cloak, is nothing to a man.

Con. Yes, it is apparel.

Bora. I mean, the fashion.

Con. Yes, the fashion is the fashion.

Bora. Tush! I may as well say, the fool's the fool. But seest thou not what a deformed thief this fashion is?

Watch. [*Aside.*] I know that Deformed; a' has been a vile thief this seven year: a' goes up and down like a gentleman: I remember his name.

Bora. Didst thou not hear somebody?

Con. No; 'twas the vane on the house.

[4] Unpractised in the ways of the world.

Bora. Seest thou not, I say, what a deformed thief this fashion is? how giddily a' turns about all the hot bloods, between fourteen and five and thirty? sometime fashioning them like Pharaoh's soldiers in the reechy[5] painting; sometime, like god Bel's priests in the old church window; sometime, like the shaven Hercules in the smirch'd[6] worm-eaten tapestry, where his cod-piece seems as massy as his club?

Con. All this I see; and see that the fashion wears out more apparel than the man. But art not thou thyself giddy with the fashion too, that thou hast shifted out of thy tale into telling me of the fashion?

Bora. Not so neither: but know that I have to-night wooed Margaret, the lady Hero's gentlewoman, by the name of Hero: she leans me out at her mistress' chamber-window, bids me a thousand times good night. — I tell this tale vilely: — I should first tell thee how the prince, Claudio, and my master, planted, and placed, and possessed by my master Don John, saw afar off in the orchard this amiable encounter.

Con. And thought thy Margaret was Hero?

Bora. Two of them did, the prince and Claudio; but the devil my master knew she was Margaret; and partly by his oaths, which first possess'd them, partly by the dark night, which did deceive them, but chiefly by my villany, which did confirm any slander that Don John had made, away went Claudio enraged; swore he would meet her, as he was appointed, next morning at the temple, and there, before the whole congregation, shame her with what

[5] That is, discoloured by smoke, *reeky*; from *recan*, Saxon.

[6] Soiled, sullied. Probably only another form of *smutched* The word is peculiar to Shakespeare.

he saw over-night, and send her home again without a husband.

1 *Watch.* We charge you in the prince's name, stand!

2 *Watch.* Call up the right master constable: We have here recovered the most dangerous piece of lechery that ever was known in the commonwealth.

1 *Watch.* And one Deformed is one of them: I know him; a' wears a lock.[7]

Con. Masters, masters!

2 *Watch.* You'll be made bring Deformed forth, I warrant you.

Con. Masters, —

1 *Watch.* Never speak: we charge you, let us obey you to go with us.

Bora. We are like to prove a goodly commodity, being taken up of these men's bills.[8]

Con. A commodity in question,[9] I warrant you. Come, we'll obey you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. A Room in LEONATO's House.

Enter HERO, MARGARET, *and* URSULA.

Hero. Good Ursula, wake my cousin Beatrice, and desire her to rise.

Urs. I will, lady.

Hero. And bid her come hither.

[7] A lock of hair, called "a love-lock," was often worn by the gay young gallants of Shakespeare's time. This ornament and invitation to love was cherished with great care by the owners, being brought before and tied with a riband. Prynne, the great Puritan hero, spit some of his bile against this fashion, in a book on The Unloveliness of Love-locks. H.

[8] We have the same conceit in 2 Henry VI.: "My lord, when shall we go to Cheapside, and *take up commodities* upon our *bills?*"

[9] That is, in examination or trial.

Urs. Well. [*Exit* URSULA.

Marg. Troth, I think, your other rabato[1] were better.

Hero. No, pray thee, good Meg, I'll wear this.

Marg. By my troth, it's not so good; and I warrant your cousin will say so.

Hero. My cousin's a fool, and thou art another; I'll wear none but this.

Marg. I like the new tire[2] within excellently, if the hair were a thought browner; and your gown's a most rare fashion, i'faith. I saw the duchess of Milan's gown, that they praise so.

Hero. O! that exceeds, they say.

Marg. By my troth, it's but a night-gown in respect of yours: Cloth o' gold, and cuts, and lac'd with silver; set with pearls down sleeves,[3] side sleeves, and skirts round, underborne with a bluish tinsel: but for a fine, quaint, graceful, and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on't.

The *rabato* was a kind of ruff or collar for the neck, such as were much worn in the Poet's time, and are often seen in the portraits of Queen Elizabeth. Dekker calls them "your stiff-necked *rebatoes*." The word is from the French *rebattre*, to beat back, and the thing is said to be so called because *put back* towards the shoulders. Shakespeare elsewhere uses *rebate*, from the same source, and with a similar meaning. H.

[2] Head-dress. See Merry Wives of Windsor, Act iii. sc. 3, note 6.

[3] That is, with pearls set along down the sleeves. *Side* sleeves are long, full sleeves. *Side* is from the Anglo-Saxon *sid*, long, ample. Peele, in his Old Wives' Tale, has "*side* slops," for long trousers. So, likewise, in Jonson's play, The New Inn, Act v. sc. 1:

> "He belly'd for it, had his velvet sleeves,
> And his branch'd cassock, a *side* sweeping gown,
> All his formalities, a good cramm'd divine."

It is plain that our word *side*, in its ordinary use, has reference to the *length* of the thing to which it is applied. H.

Hero. God give me joy to wear it, for my heart is exceeding heavy!

Marg. 'Twill be heavier soon by the weight of a man.

Hero. Fie upon thee! art not ashamed?

Marg. Of what, lady? of speaking honourably? Is not marriage honourable in a beggar? Is not your lord honourable without marriage? I think you would have me say, saving your reverence, — a husband: an bad thinking do not wrest true speaking, I'll offend nobody: Is there any harm in — the heavier for a husband? None, I think, an it be the right husband, and the right wife; otherwise 'tis light, and not heavy: Ask my lady Beatrice else; here she comes.

Enter BEATRICE.

Hero. Good morrow, coz.

Beat. Good morrow, sweet Hero.

Hero. Why, how now! do you speak in the sick tune?

Beat. I am out of all other tune, methinks.

Marg. Clap us into — "Light o' love;" that goes without a burden: do you sing it, and I'll dance it.

Beat. Yea, "Light o' love,"[4] with your heels! — then if your husband have stables enough, you'll look he shall lack no barns.[5]

Marg. O illegitimate construction! I scorn that with my heels.

Beat. 'Tis almost five o'clock, cousin; 'tis time

[4] The name of a popular old dance tune mentioned again in The Two Gentlemen of Verona, and in several of our old dramas

[5] A quibble between *barns*, repositories for corn, and *bairns* children, formerly pronounced *barns*. So, in The Winter's Tale "Mercy on us, a *barn!* a very pretty *barn!*"

you were ready. By my troth I am exceeding ill · — hey ho!

Marg. For a hawk, a horse, or a husband?

Beat. For[6] the letter that begins them all, H.[7]

Marg. Well, an you be not turn'd Turk, there's no more sailing by the star.

Beat. What means the fool, trow?[8]

Marg. Nothing I; but God send every one their heart's desire!

Hero. These gloves the count sent me: they are an excellent perfume.

Beat. I am stuff'd, cousin; I cannot smell.

Marg. A maid, and stuff'd! there's goodly catching of cold.

Beat. O, God help me! God help me! how long have you profess'd apprehension?

Marg. Ever since you left it: doth not my wit become me rarely?

Beat. It is not seen enough; you should wear it in your cap. — By my troth, I am sick.

Marg. Get you some of this distill'd Cardnus Benedictus,[9] and lay it to your heart: it is the only thing for a qualm

[6] *Because of.*

[7] That is for an *ache* or pain, pronounced like the letter *h*. See The Tempest, Act i. sc. 2, note 34. Heywood has an epigram which best elucidates this:

"H is worst among letters in the cross-row,
For if thou find him either in thine elbow,
In thine arm or leg, in any degree;
In thine head, or teeth, or toe, or knee;
Into what place soever H may pike him,
Wherever thou find him *ache* thou shalt not like him."

[8] So, in The Merry Wives of Windsor: — "Who's there, *trow?*" This obsolete exclamation of inquiry is a contraction of *trow ye?* think you? believe you?

[9] *Carduus Benedictus*, or the blessed thistle, was one of the ancient herbs medicinal, like those which in our day a much-expe-

Hero. There thou prick'st her with a thistle.

Beat. Benedictus! why Benedictus? you have some moral [10] in this Benedictus.

Marg. Moral! no, by my troth, I have no moral meaning; I meant, plain holy-thistle. You may think, perchance, that I think you are in love: nay, by'r lady, I am not such a fool to think what I list; nor I list not to think what I can; nor, indeed, I cannot think, if I would think my heart out of thinking, that you are in love, or that you will be in love, or that you can be in love. Yet Benedick was such another, and now is he become a man: he swore he would never marry; and yet now, in despite of his heart, he eats his meat without grudging: [11] and how you may be converted, I know not; but methinks you look with your eyes as other women do.

Beat. What pace is this that thy tongue keeps?

Marg. Not a false gallop.

Re-enter URSULA.

Urs. Madam, withdraw: the prince, the count, signior Benedick, Don John, and all the gallants of the town, are come to fetch you to Church.

Hero. Help to dress me, good coz, good Meg, good Ursula. [*Exeunt.*

rienced motherhood has often applied successfully to the "ills that flesh is heir to." Thus, in Cogan's Haven of Health, 1595: "This herb, for the singular virtue it hath, is worthily named *Benedictus*, or *Omnimorbia*, that is, a salve for every sore, not known to the physicians of old time, but lately revealed by the special providence of Almighty God." H.

[10] That is, some *hidden meaning*, like the *moral* of a fable. Thus, in the Rape of Lucrece: "Nor could she *moralize* his wanton sight." And in The Taming of the Shrew: "To expound the *meaning* or *moral* of his signs and tokens."

[11] That is, *feeds* on *love*, and likes his food.

SCENE V Another Room in Leonato's House

Enter Leonato, *with* Dogberry *and* Verges.

Leon. What would you with me, honest neigh bour ?

Dogb. Marry, sir, I would have some confidence with you, that decerns you nearly.

Leon. Brief, I pray you ; for you see it is a busy time with me.

Dogb. Marry, this it is, sir.

Verg. Yes, in truth it is, sir.

Leon. What is it, my good friends ?

Dogb. Goodman Verges, sir, speaks a little off the matter : an old man, sir, and his wits are not so blunt, as, God help, I would desire they were ; but, in faith, honest as the skin between his brows.

Verg. Yes, I thank God, I am as honest as any man living, that is an old man, and no honester than I.

Dogb. Comparisons are odorous : *palabras*,[1] neighbour Verges.

Leon. Neighbours, you are tedious.

Dogb. It pleases your worship to say so, but we are the poor[2] Duke's officers ; but, truly, for mine own part, if I were as tedious as a king, I could find in my heart to bestow it all of your worship.

Leon. All thy tediousness on me ? ha !

[1] How this Spanish word came into our language is uncertain. It seems to have been current for a time, even among the vulgar, and was probably introduced by our sailors, as well as the corrupted form, *palaver*. We have it again in the mouth of Sly the Tinker : " Therefore *paucas pallabris :* let the world slide, Sessa."

[2] This stroke of pleasantry, arising from the transposition of the epithet *poor*, has already occurred in Measure for Measure. Elbow says, " If it please your honour, I am the *poor Duke's* constable."

Dogb. Yea, an 'twere a thousand pound more than 'tis; for I hear as good exclamation on your worship, as of any man in the city; and though I be but a poor man, I am glad to hear it.

Verg. And so am I.

Leon. I would fain know what you have to say.

Verg. Marry, sir, our watch to-night, excepting your worship's presence, have ta'en a couple of arrant knaves as any in Messina.

Dogb. A good old man, sir; he will be talking: as they say, When the age is in, the wit is out. God help us! it is a world to see![3] — Well said, i'faith, neighbour Verges: — well, God's a good man: an two men ride of a horse, one must ride behind. — An honest soul, i'faith, sir; by my troth he is, as ever broke bread: but God is to be worshipp'd: All men are not alike; alas! good neighbour!

Leon. Indeed, neighbour, he comes too short of you.

Dogb. Gifts, that God gives.

Leon. I must leave you.

Dogb. One word, sir: Our watch, sir, have, indeed, comprehended two aspicious persons, and we would have them this morning examined before your worship.

Leon. Take their examination yourself, and bring it me: I am now in great haste, as it may appear unto you.

Dogb. It shall be suffigance.

[3] This was a common apostrophe of admiration, equivalent to *it is wonderful*, or *it is admirable*. Baret in his Alvearie, 1580, explains "*It is a world to heare*" by "It is a thing worthie the hearing, *audire est operæ pretium.*" In Cavendish's Life of Wolsey we have "Is it not *a world* to consider?"

Leon. Drink some wine ere you go: Fare you well.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. My lord, they stay for you to give your daughter to her husband.

Leon. I'll wait upon them: I am ready.

[*Exeunt* LEONATO *and Messenger.*

Dogb. Go, good partner, go; get you to Francis Seacoal; bid him bring his pen and inkhorn to the jail: we are now to examination these men.

Verg. And we must do it wisely.

Dogb. We will spare for no wit, I warrant you; here's that [*Touching his forehead.*] shall drive some of them to a *non com:* only get the learned writer to set down our excommunication, and meet me at the jail. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. The Inside of a Church.

Enter Don PEDRO, JOHN, LEONATO, *Friar*, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, HERO, BEATRICE, *&c.*

Leon. Come, friar Francis, be brief: only to the plain form of marriage, and you shall recount their particular duties afterwards.

Friar. You come hither, my lord, to marry this lady?

Claud. No.

Leon. To be married to her; friar, you come to marry her.

Friar. Lady, you come hither to be married to this count?

Hero. I do.

Friar. If either of you know any inward impediment why you should not be conjoined, I charge you, on your souls, to utter it.[1]

Claud. Know you any, Hero?

Hero. None, my lord.

Friar. Know you any, count?

Leon. I dare make his answer; none.

Claud. O, what men dare do! what men may do! what men daily do! not knowing what they do!

Bene. How now! Interjections? Why, then some be of laughing, as, ha! ha! he![2]

Claud. Stand thee by, friar: — Father, by your leave!
Will you with free and unconstrained soul
Give me this maid, your daughter?

Leon. As freely, son, as God did give her me.

Claud. And what have I to give you back, whose worth
May counterpoise this rich and precious gift?

D. Pedro. Nothing, unless you render her again.

Claud. Sweet prince, you learn me noble thankfulness. —
There, Leonato, take her back again:
Give not this rotten orange to your friend;
She's but the sign and semblance of her honour: —
Behold, how like a maid she blushes here:
O, what authority and show of truth
Can cunning sin cover itself withal!

[1] This is borrowed from our marriage ceremony, which (with a few changes in phraseology) is the same as was used in Shakespeare's time.

[2] Benedick is in a grammatical state of mind and here quotes from his Accidence. H.

Comes not that blood, as modest evidence,
To witness simple virtue? Would you not swear
All you that see her, that she were a maid,
By these exterior shows? — But she is none!
She knows the heat of a luxurious bed;
Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty.

Leon. What do you mean, my lord?

Claud. Not to be married,
Not to knit my soul to an approved wanton.

Leon. Dear my lord, if you, in your own proof,
Have vanquish'd the resistance of her youth,
And made defeat of her virginity,—

Claud. I know what you would say: If I have known her,
You'll say she did embrace me as a husband,
And so extenuate the 'forehand sin:
No, Leonato,
I never tempted her with word too large;
But, as a brother to his sister, show'd
Bashful sincerity, and comely love.

Hero. And seem'd I ever otherwise to you?

Claud. Out on thy seeming! I will write against it,—
You seem to me as Dian in her orb;
As chaste as is the bud ere it be blown;
But you are more intemperate in your blood
Than Venus, or those pamper'd animals
That rage in savage sensuality.

Hero. Is my lord well, that he doth speak so wide?

Leon. Sweet prince, why speak not you?

D. Pedro. What should I speak?
I stand dishonour'd, that have gone about
To link my dear friend to a common stale.

Leon. Are these things spoken? or do I but dream?

John. Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true.

Bene. This looks not like a nuptial.

Hero. True? O God![3]

Claud. Leonato, stand I here?
Is this the prince? Is this the prince's brother?
Is this face Hero's? Are our eyes our own?

Leon. All this is so; but what of this, my lord?

Claud. Let me but move one question to your daughter;
And, by that fatherly and kindly power[4]
That you have in her, bid her answer truly.

Leon. I charge thee do so, as thou art my child.

Hero. O God, defend me! how am I beset!—
What kind of catechizing call you this?

Claud. To make you answer truly to your name.

Hero. Is it not Hero? Who can blot that name
With any just reproach?

Claud. Marry, that can Hero:
Hero itself can blot out Hero's virtue.
What man was he talk'd with you yesternight
Out at your window, betwixt twelve and one?
Now, if you are a maid, answer to this.

Hero. I talk'd with no man at that hour, my lord

D. Pedro. Why, then are you no maiden.—Leonato,

[3] Hero's words are in reply to the speech of John. The passage is usually pointed thus: "True, O God!" as if it were in answer to Benedick. H.

[4] *Kind* was often used in Shakespeare's time for *nature*, *kindly* for *natural* or *naturally*. So that *kindly* power here means natural power. Thus, in the Induction to The Taming of the Shrew: 'This do, and do it *kindly*, gentle sirs." So, likewise, in Spenser's Faery Queene:

> "The earth shall sooner leave her *kindly* skill
> To bring forth fruit, and make eternall dearth,
> Than I leave you, my life, yborne of heavenly birth." H

I am sorry you must hear: Upon mine honour,
Myself, my brother, and this grieved count,
Did see her, hear her, at that hour last night,
Talk with a ruffian at her chamber-window;
Who hath, indeed, most like a liberal [5] villain,
Confess'd the vile encounters they have had
A thousand times in secret.

John. Fie, fie! they are not to be nam'd, my lord,
Not to be spoke of;
There is not chastity enough in language,
Without offence, to utter them: Thus, pretty lady,
I am sorry for thy much misgovernment.

Claud. O Hero! what a Hero hadst thou been,
If half thy outward graces had been plac'd
About thy thoughts, and counsels of thy heart!
But, fare thee well, most foul, most fair! farewell
Thou pure impiety, and impious purity!
For thee I'll lock up all the gates of love,
And on my eyelids shall conjecture hang,
To turn all beauty into thoughts of harm,
And never shall it more be gracious.

Leon. Hath no man's dagger here a point for me? [HERO *swoons.*

Beat. Why, how now, cousin! wherefore sink you down?

John. Come, let us go: these things, come thus to light,
Smother her spirits up.

[*Exeunt D.* PED., JOHN, *and* CLAUD

Bene. How doth the lady?

Beat. Dead, I think:—help, uncle!—
Hero! why, Hero!—Uncle!—Signior Benedick!
—Friar!

[5] *Liberal* here, as in many places of these plays, means *licentious, free beyond honour or decency.* This sense of the word is not peculiar to Shakespeare.

Leon. O fate! take not away thy heavy hand!
Death is the fairest cover for her shame,
That may be wish'd for.
Beat. How now, cousin Hero?
Friar. Have comfort, lady.
Leon. Dost thou look up?
Friar Yea; wherefore should she not?
Leon. Wherefore? Why, doth not every earthly thing
Cry shame upon her? Could she here deny
The story that is printed in her blood?[6] —
Do not live, Hero; do not ope thine eyes:
For did I think thou wouldst not quickly die,
Thought I thy spirits were stronger than thy shames,
Myself would, on the rearward of reproaches,
Strike at thy life. Griev'd I, I had but one?
Chid I for that at frugal nature's frame?
O, one too much by thee! Why had I one?
Why ever wast thou lovely in my eyes?
Why had I not, with charitable hand,
Took up a beggar's issue at my gates;
Who smirched thus, and mir'd with infamy,
I might have said, "No part of it is mine;
This shame derives itself from unknown loins?'
But mine, and mine I lov'd, and mine I prais'd,
And mine that I was proud on; mine so much,
That I myself was to myself not mine,
Valuing of her; why, she — O, she is fallen
Into a pit of ink! that the wide sea
Hath drops too few to wash her clean again;
And salt too little, which may season give
To her foul tainted flesh!
Bene. Sir, sir, be patient

[6] That is, which her *blushes* discovered to be true.

For my part, I am so attir'd in wonder,
I know not what to say.

Beat. O, on my soul, my cousin is belied!

Bene. Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?

Beat. No, truly, not; although, until last night,
I have this twelvemonth been her bedfellow.

Leon. Confirm'd, confirm'd! O, that is stronger made,
Which was before barr'd up with ribs of iron!
Would the two princes lie? and Claudio lie?
Who lov'd her so, that, speaking of her foulness,
Wash'd it with tears? Hence from her! let her die.

Friar. Hear me a little;
For I have only been silent so long,
And given way unto this course of fortune,
By noting of the lady: I have mark'd
A thousand blushing apparitions start
Into her face; a thousand innocent shames
In angel whiteness beat away those blushes;
And in her eye there hath appear'd a fire,
To burn the errors that these princes hold
Against her maiden truth. — Call me a fool;
Trust not my reading, nor my observations,
Which with experimental seal doth warrant
The tenour of my book; trust not my age,
My reverence, calling, nor divinity,
If this sweet lady lie not guiltless here
Under some biting error.

Leon. Friar, it cannot be:
Thou seest, that all the grace that she hath left
Is, that she will not add to her damnation
A sin of perjury: she not denies it.
Why seek'st thou, then, to cover with excuse
That which appears in proper nakedness?

Friar. Lady, what man is he you are accus'd of?

Hero. They know, that do accuse me; I know none:
If I know more of any man alive,
Than that which maiden modesty doth warrant,
Let all my sins lack mercy! — O, my father!
Prove you that any man with me convers'd
At hours unmeet, or that I yesternight
Maintain'd the change of words with any creature,
Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death.

Friar. There is some strange misprision in the princes.

Bene. Two of them have the very bent of honour;
And if their wisdoms be misled in this,
The practice of it lives in John the bastard,
Whose spirits toil in frame of villanies.

Leon. I know not: If they speak but truth of her,
These hands shall tear her: if they wrong her honour,
The proudest of them shall well hear of it.
Time hath not yet so dried this blood of mine,
Nor age so eat up my invention,
Nor fortune made such havoc of my means,
Nor my bad life reft me so much of friends,
But they shall find, awak'd in such a kind,
Both strength of limb, and policy of mind,
Ability in means, and choice of friends,
To quit me of them throughly.

Friar. Pause awhile,
And let my counsel sway you in this case.
Your daughter here the princes left for dead;
Let her awhile be secretly kept in,
And publish it, that she is dead indeed:
Maintain a mourning ostentation;
And on your family's old monument

Hang mournful epitaphs, and do all rites
That appertain unto a burial.

Leon. What shall become of this? What will this do?

Friar. Marry, this, well carried, shall on her behalf
Change slander to remorse; that is some good:
But not for that dream I on this strange course,
But on this travail look for greater birth.
She dying, as it must be so maintain'd,
Upon the instant that she was accus'd,
Shall be lamented, pitied and excus'd,
Of every hearer: For it so falls out,
That what we have we prize not to the worth,
Whiles we enjoy it; but being lack'd and lost,
Why, then we rack[7] the value; then we find
The virtue, that possession would not show us
Whiles it was ours. — So will it fare with Claudio
When he shall hear she died upon his words,
The idea of her life shall sweetly creep
Into his study of imagination;
And every lovely organ of her life
Shall come apparell'd in more precious habit,
More moving, delicate, and full of life,
Into the eye and prospect of his soul,
Than when she liv'd indeed: — then shall he mourn,
(If ever love had interest in his liver,)[8]
And wish he had not so accused her;
No, though he thought his accusation true.
Let this be so, and doubt not but success
Will fashion the event in better shape
Than I can lay it down in likelihood.

[7] That is, strain it up to the highest pitch. So, in the common phrase, *rack-rent*. H.

[8] The *liver* was formerly thought to be the seat of the passions See The Tempest, Act IV sc. 1, note 5.

But if all aim but this be levell'd false,
The supposition of the lady's death
Will quench the wonder of her infamy:
And, if it sort not well, you may conceal her,
As best befits her wounded reputation,
In some reclusive and religious life,
Out of all eyes, tongues, minds, and injuries.

Bene. Signior Leonato, let the Friar advise you:
And though, you know, my inwardness [9] and love
Is very much unto the prince and Claudio,
Yet, by mine honour, I will deal in this
As secretly, and justly, as your soul
Should with your body.

Leon. Being that I flow in grief,
The smallest twine may lead me.[10]

Friar. 'Tis well consented: presently away;
For to strange sores they strangely strain the cure.—
Come, lady, die to live: this wedding day,
Perhaps, is but prolong'd: have patience, and endure. [*Exeunt Friar*, HERO, *and* LEON

Bene. Lady Beatrice, have you wept all this while?

Beat. Yea, and I will weep awhile longer.

Bene. I will not desire that.

Beat. You have no reason; I do it freely.

Bene. Surely, I do believe your fair cousin is wrong'd.

[9] *Inwardness* is here used for *intimacy*. *Inward* often occurs in a similar sense, both as a noun and an adjective. Thus, in Measure for Measure, Act iii. sc. 2: "Sir, I was an *inward* of his." And in Richard III., Act iii. sc. 4:

"Who knows the lord protector's mind herein?
Who is most *inward* with the noble Duke?" H.

[10] This is one of Shakespeare's subtle observations upon life. Men, overpowered with distress, eagerly listen to the first offers of relief, close with every scheme, and believe every promise. He that has no longer any confidence in himself is glad to repose his trust in any other that will undertake to guide him.

Beat. Ah, how much might the man deserve of me, that would right her!

Bene. Is there any way to show such friendship?

Beat. A very even way, but no such friend.

Bene. May a man do it?

Beat. It is a man's office, but not yours.

Bene. I do love nothing in the world so well as you: Is not that strange?

Beat. As strange as the thing I know not: It were as possible for me to say, I loved nothing so well as you: but believe me not; and yet I lie not: I confess nothing, nor I deny nothing: — I am sorry for my cousin.

Bene. By my sword, Beatrice, thou lovest me.

Beat. Do not swear by it, and eat it.

Bene. I will swear by it that you love me; and I will make him eat it, that says I love not you.

Beat. Will you not eat your word?

Bene. With no sauce that can be devised to it: I protest I love thee!

Beat. Why then, God forgive me!

Bene. What offence, sweet Beatrice?

Beat. You have stayed me in a happy hour: I was about to protest I loved you.

Bene. And do it with all thy heart.

Beat. I love you with so much of my heart, that none is left to protest.

Bene. Come, bid me do any thing for thee.

Beat. Kill Claudio.

Bene. Ha! not for the wide world.

Beat. You kill me to deny it: Farewell.

Bene. Tarry, sweet Beatrice.

Beat. I am gone, though I am here:[11] — There

[11] That is, though my person stay with you, my heart is gone from you. H.

is no love in you: — Nay, I pray you, let me go.

Bene. Beatrice, —

Beat. In faith, I will go.

Bene. We'll be friends first.

Beat. You dare easier be friends with me, than fight with mine enemy.

Bene. Is Claudio thine enemy?

Beat. Is he not approved in the height a villain, that hath slandered, scorned, dishonoured my kinswoman? — O, that I were a man! — What! bear her in hand[12] until they come to take hands; and then with public accusation, uncovered slander, unmitigated rancour, — O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market place.

Bene. Hear me, Beatrice; —

Beat. Talk with a man out at a window! — a proper saying!

Bene. Nay, but, Beatrice; —

Beat. Sweet Hero! — she is wrong'd, she is slandered, she is undone.

Bene. Beat —

Beat. Princes, and counties![13] Surely, a princely testimony, a goodly count, Count Confect;[14] a sweet gallant, surely! O that I were a man for his sake! or that I had any friend would be a man for my sake! But manhood is melted into courtesies, valour into compliment, and men are only turned into

[12] A common phrase of the time, signifying to *take, lead, carry* along, as an expectant or friend. See Measure for Measure, Act i. sc. 5, note 6. H

[13] *Countie* was the ancient term for a *count* or *earl*.

[14] That is, an image of a man, cast in sugar; such a nobleman as *confectioners* sell, "a sweet gallant:" of course spoken in contempt. We give the old and true reading. The usual reading is "a goodly count-confect." H.

tongue, and trim ones too :[15] he is now as valiant as Hercules, that only tells a lie, and swears it. — I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a woman with grieving.

Bene. Tarry, good Beatrice : By this hand, I love thee.

Beat. Use it for my love some other way than swearing by it.

Bene. Think you in your soul the count Claudio hath wrong'd Hero ?

Beat. Yea, as sure as I have a thought, or a soul.

Bene. Enough ! I am engag'd, I will challenge him : I will kiss your hand and so leave you : By this hand, Claudio shall render me a dear account : As you hear of me, so think of me. Go, comfort your cousin : I must say, she is dead ; and so, farewell. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. A Prison.

Enter DOGBERRY, VERGES, *and Sexton, in gowns, and Watchmen, with* CONRADE *and* BORACHIO.

Dogb. Is our whole dissembly appear'd ?

Verg. O, a stool and a cushion for the sexton !

Sexton. Which be the malefactors ?

Dogb. Marry, that am I and my partner.

Verg. Nay, that's certain ; we have the exhibition to examine.[1]

Sexton. But which are the offenders that are to

[15] *Trim* seems here to signify *apt, fair spoken.* *Tongue* used in the singular, and *trim ones* in the plural, is a mode of construction not uncommon in Shakespeare.

[1] This is a blunder of the constables, for "examination to exhibit." In the last scene of the third act, Leonato says, "Take their examination yourself and bring it me."

be examined? let them come before master constable.

Dogb. Yea, marry, let them come before me. — What is your name, friend?

Bora. Borachio.

Dogb. Pray write down — Borachio. — Yours, sirrah?

Con. I am a gentleman, sir, and my name is Conrade.

Dogb. Write down — master gentleman Conrade — Masters, do you serve God?

Con. Bora. Yea, sir, we hope.

Dogb. Write down — that they hope they serve God: — and write God first; for God defend but God should go before such villains! — Masters, it is proved already that you are little better than false knaves; and it will go near to be thought so shortly. How answer you for yourselves?

Con. Marry, sir, we say we are none.

Dogb. A marvellous witty fellow, I assure you; but I will go about with him. — Come you hither, sirrah; a word in your ear, sir: I say to you, it is thought you are false knaves.

Bora. Sir, I say to you, we are none.

Dogb. Well, stand aside. — 'Fore God, they are both in a tale! Have you writ down — that they are none?

Sexton. Master constable, you go not the way to examine: you must call forth the watch that are their accusers.

Dogb. Yea, marry, that's the eftest[2] way: — Let the watch come forth: — Masters, I charge you, in the prince's name, accuse these men.

[2] That is, the quickest way.

1 *Watch.* This man said, sir, that Don John, the prince's brother, was a villain.

Dogb. Write down — prince John a villain. — Why, this is flat perjury, to call a prince's brother villain.

Bora. Master constable, —

Dogb. Pray thee, fellow, peace: I do not like thy look, I promise thee.

Sexton. What heard you him say else?

2 *Watch.* Marry, that he had received a thousand ducats of Don John, for accusing the lady Hero wrongfully.

Dogb. Flat burglary, as ever was committed.

Verg. Yea, by the mass, that it is.

Sexton. What else, fellow?

1 *Watch.* And that count Claudio did mean upon his words, to disgrace Hero before the whole assembly, and not marry her.

Dogb. O villain! thou wilt be condemn'd into everlasting redemption for this.

Sexton. What else?

2 *Watch.* This is all.

Sexton. And this is more, masters, than you can deny. Prince John is this morning secretly stolen away: Hero was in this manner accus'd, in this very manner refus'd, and upon the grief of this suddenly died. — Master constable, let these men be bound, and brought to Leonato's: I will go before, and show him their examination. [*Exit.*

Dogb. Come, let them be opinion'd.

Verg. Let them be in the hands[3] —

[3] The reading of the old copies here is, — "Let them be in the hands of coxcomb;" thus running two speeches into one, as is evident from Dogberry's reply. The correction was made by Theobald, and has been universally received. Of course Verges

Con. Off, coxcomb!

Dogb. God's my life! where's the sexton? let him write down — the prince's officer, coxcomb. — Come, bind them: — Thou naughty varlet!

Con. Away! you are an ass, you are an ass!

Dogb. Dost thou not suspect my place? Dost thou not suspect my years? — O that he were here to write me down — an ass! — but, masters, remember, that I am an ass; though it be not written down, yet forget not that I am an ass: — No, thou villain, thou art full of piety, as shall be prov'd upon thee by good witness. I am a wise fellow; and, which is more, an officer; and, which is more, a householder; and, which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any is in Messina; and one that knows the law, go to; and a rich fellow enough, go to; and a fellow that hath had losses; and one that hath two gowns, and every thing handsome about him: — Bring him away. O, that I had been writ down — an ass! [*Exeunt*

ACT V.

SCENE I. Before LEONATO'S House.

Enter LEONATO *and* ANTONIO.

Ant. If you go on thus, you will kill yourself;
And 'tis not wisdom, thus to second grief
Against yourself.

was broken off in the midst of his speech; so that there is no telling how he would have ended. H.

Leon. I pray thee, cease thy counsel
Which falls into mine ears as profitless
As water in a sieve: give not me counsel;
Nor let no comforter delight mine ear,
But such a one whose wrongs do suit with mine.
Bring me a father, that so lov'd his child,
Whose joy of her is overwhelm'd like mine,
And bid him speak of patience;
Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine
And let it answer every strain for strain;
As thus for thus, and such a grief for such,
In every lineament, branch, shape, and form:
If such a one will smile, and stroke his beard;
Cry — sorrow, wag! and hem, when he should groan;[1]
Patch grief with proverbs; make misfortune drunk
With candle-wasters;[2] bring him yet to me,
And I of him will gather patience.
But there is no such man: For, brother, men
Can counsel, and speak comfort to that grief
Which they themselves not feel; but, tasting it,
Their counsel turns to passion, which before
Would give preceptial medicine to rage,
Fetter strong madness in a silken thread,

[1] The old copies read, — "And sorrow, wagge, cry hem," &c. The emendation and arrangement of this line is by Dr. Johnson, who thus explains the passage: "If he will smile, and cry *sorrow be gone!* and hem instead of groaning." Steevens proposed to read, — "And, *sorry* wag, cry hem," &c., which is very plausible, but he abandoned his own reading in favour of Johnson's.

[2] *Candle-waster* was sometimes used as a contemptuous term for a book-worm, as appears from a passage in Ben Jonson's Cynthia's Revels, Act iii. sc. 2: "Heart, was there ever so prosperous an invention thus unluckily perverted and spoiled by a whoreson *book worm, a candle-waster?*" Leonato's whole speech is aimed at those comforters who moralize by the book against our natural emotions; who would have us drown our troubles in a cup of bookish philosophy. H.

Charm ache with air, and agony with words.
No, no; 'tis all men's office to speak patience
To those that wring under the load of sorrow;
But no man's virtue, nor sufficiency,
To be so moral, when he shall endure
The like himself. Therefore give me no counsel:
My griefs cry louder than advertisement.[3]

Ant. Therein do men from children nothing differ.

Leon. I pray thee, peace! I will be flesh and blood;
For there was never yet philosopher,
That could endure the tooth-ache patiently;
However they have writ the style of gods,
And made a push[4] at chance and sufferance.

Ant. Yet bend not all the harm upon yourself;
Make those, that do offend you, suffer too.

Leon. There thou speak'st reason: nay, I will do so.
My soul doth tell me Hero is belied,
And that shall Claudio know; so shall the prince,
And all of them, that thus dishonour her.

Enter Don PEDRO *and* CLAUDIO.

Ant. Here comes the prince, and Claudio, hastily.

D. Pedro. Good den, good den.

Claud. Good day to both of you.

Leon. Hear you, my lords, —

D. Pedro. We have some haste, Leonato.

Leon. Some haste, my lord! — well, fare you well, my lord: —
Are you so hasty now? — well, all is one.

[3] That is, my griefs outtongue your admonition. H.

[4] *Push* is the reading of the old copy, which Pope altered to *pish* without any seeming necessity. To make a *push* at any thing is to contend against it or defy it.

D. Pedro. Nay, do not quarrel with us, good old man.

Ant. If he could right himself with quarrelling,
Some of us would lie low.

Claud. Who wrongs him?

Leon. Marry, thou dost wrong me; thou dissembler, thou: —
Nay, never lay thy hand upon thy sword;
I fear thee not.

Claud. Marry, beshrew my hand,
If it should give your age such cause of fear:
In faith, my hand meant nothing to my sword.

Leon. Tush, tush, man! never fleer and jest at me:
I speak not like a dotard, nor a fool;
As, under privilege of age, to brag
What I have done being young, or what would do,
Were I not old: Know, Claudio, to thy head,
Thou hast so wrong'd mine innocent child and me,
That I am forc'd to lay my reverence by;
And, with grey hairs, and bruise of many days,
Do challenge thee to trial of a man.
I say, thou hast belied mine innocent child:
Thy slander hath gone through and through her heart,
And she lies buried with her ancestors;
O! in a tomb where never scandal slept,
Save this of hers, fram'd by thy villainy.

Claud. My villainy?

Leon. Thine, Claudio; thine I say

D. Pedro. You say not right, old man.

Leon. My lord, my lord
I'll prove it on his body, if he dare;
Despite his nice fence, and his active practice,[5]
His May of youth, and bloom of lustyhood.

[5] Skill in fencing.

Claud. Away! I will not have to do with you.

Leon. Canst thou so daff[6] me? Thou hast kill'd my child;

If thou kill'st me, boy, thou shalt kill a man.

Ant. He shall kill two of us, and men indeed:

But that's no matter: let him kill one first;—

Win me and wear me,—let him answer me:—

Come, follow me, boy! come, sir boy, come, follow me:

Sir boy, I'll whip you from your foining[7] fence;

Nay, as I am a gentleman, I will.

Leon. Brother,—

Ant. Content yourself: God knows, I lov'd my niece;

And she is dead; slander'd to death by villains,

That dare as well answer a man, indeed,

As I dare take a serpent by the tongue;

Boys, apes, braggarts, jacks, milksops!—

Leon. Brother Antony,—

Ant. Hold you content: What, man! I know them, yea,

And what they weigh, even to the utmost scruple:

Scambling,[8] out-facing, fashion-mongering boys,

That lie, and cog, and flout, deprave and slander,

Go antiely, and show outward hideousness,

And speak off half a dozen dangerous words,

How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst,

And this is all

Leon. But, brother Antony,—

[6] This is only a corrupt form of *doff*, to *do off*, or *put off*.

[7] Thrusting.

[8] *Scambling* appears to have been much the same as *scrambling*, shifting or shuffling. "Griffe graffe," says Cotgrave, "by hook or by crook, squimble squamble, *scamblingly*, catch that catch may." We have "*skimble skamble* stuff" in 1 Henry IV.

Ant. Come, 'tis no matter.
Do not you meddle; let me deal in this.

D. Pedro. Gentlemen both, we will not wake[9] your patience.
My heart is sorry for your daughter's death;
But, on my honour, she was charg'd with nothing
But what was true, and very full of proof.

Leon. My lord, my lord! —

D. Pedro. I will not hear you.

Leon. No?
Come, brother, away: — I will be heard. —

Ant. And shall, or some of us will smart for it.
[*Exeunt* LEONATO *and* ANTONIO

Enter BENEDICK.

D. Pedro. See, see: here comes the man we went to seek.

Claud. Now, signior, what news?

Bene. Good day, my lord.

D. Pedro. Welcome, signior: You are almost come to part almost a fray.

Claud. We had like to have had our two noses snapp'd off with two old men without teeth.

D. Pedro. Leonato and his brother: What think'st thou? Had we fought, I doubt, we should have been too young for them.

Bene. In a false quarrel, there is no true valour. I came to seek you both.

Claud. We have been up and down to seek thee; for we are high-proof melancholy, and would fain have it beaten away: Wilt thou use thy wit?

Bene. It is in my scabbard: shall I draw it?

D. Pedro. Dost thou wear thy wit by thy side?

[9] That is, rouse, stir up, convert your patience into anger, by remaining longer in your presence.

Claud. Never any did so, though very many have been beside their wit.—I will bid thee draw, as we do the minstrels; draw, to pleasure us.[10]

D. Pedro. As I am an honest man, he looks pale:—Art thou sick, or angry?

Claud. What! courage, man! What though care kill'd a cat, thou hast mettle enough in thee to kill care.

Bene. Sir, I shall meet your wit in the career, an you charge it against me:—I pray you, choose another subject.

Claud. Nay, then give him another staff; this last was broke cross.[11]

D. Pedro. By this light, he changes more and more: I think he be angry indeed.

Claud. If he be, he knows how to turn his girdle.[12]

Bene. Shall I speak a word in your ear?

Claud. God bless me from a challenge!

Bene. You are a villain.—I jest not:—I will make it good how you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare:—Do me right, or I will protest your cowardice. You have kill'd a sweet lady,

[10] "I will bid thee draw thy sword, as we bid the minstrels draw the bows of their fiddles, merely to please us."

[11] The allusion here is to tilting. It was held very disgraceful for a tilter to have his spear broken across the body of his adversary, instead of by a push of the point. Thus, in As You Like It, Act iii. sc. 4: "As a puny tilter, that spurs his horse but on one side, breaks his staff like a noble goose." H.

[12] Thus, Sir Ralph Winwood in a letter to Cecil: "I said, what I spake was not to make him angry. He replied,—If I were angry, I might turn the buckle of my girdle behind me." The phrase came from the practice of wrestlers, and is thus explained by Mr. Holt White: "Large belts were worn with the buckle before, but for wrestling the buckle was turned behind, to give the adversary a fairer grasp at the girdle. To turn the buckle behind was therefore a challenge." H.

and her death shall fall heavy on you: Let me hear from you.

Claud. Well, I will meet you, so I may have good cheer.

D. Pedro. What, a feast? a feast?

Claud. I'faith, I thank him; he hath bid me to a calf's head and a capon; the which if I do not carve most curiously, say my knife's naught.—Shall I not find a woodcock too.[13]

Bene. Sir, your wit ambles well; it goes easily.

D. Pedro. I'll tell thee how Beatrice prais'd thy wit the other day. I said thou hadst a fine wit: 'True," says she, "a fine little one:" "No," said I, "a great wit:" "Right," says she, "a great gross one:" "Nay," said I, "a good wit:" "Just," said she, "it hurts nobody:" "Nay," said I, "the gentleman is wise:" "Certain," said she, "a wise gentleman:"[14] "Nay," said I, "he hath the tongues:" "That I believe," said she, "for he swore a thing to me on Monday night, which he forswore on Tuesday morning: there's a double tongue; there's two tongues." Thus did she, an hour together, transshape thy particular virtues; yet, at last, she concluded with a sigh, thou wast the properest man in Italy.

Claud. For the which she wept heartily, and said she car'd not.

[13] *A woodcock* was a common term for a foolish fellow; that savoury bird being supposed to have no brains. Claudio alludes to the stratagem whereby Benedick has been made to fall in love. Thus, Sir William Cecil, in a letter to Secretary Maitland, referring to an attempted escape of some French hostages: "I went to lay some lime-twigs for certain *woodcocks*, which I have taken." The proverbial simplicity of the woodcock is often celebrated by Shakespeare. See Twelfth Night, Act iv. sc. 2, note 7. H.

[14] *Wise gentleman* was probably used ironically for a silly fellow; as we still say a *wise-acre*.

D. Pedro. Yea, that she did; but yet, for all that, an if she did not hate him deadly, she would love him dearly: The old man's daughter told us all.

Claud. All, all; and moreover, God saw him when he was hid in the garden.

D. Pedro. But when shall we set the savage bull's horns on the sensible Benedick's head?

Claud. Yea, and text underneath, "Here dwells Benedick the married man!"

Bene. Fare you well, boy; you know my mind I will leave you now to your gossip-like humour: you break jests as braggarts do their blades, which, God be thanked, hurt not. — My lord, for your many courtesies I thank you: I must discontinue your company. Your brother, the bastard, is fled from Messina: you have, among you, kill'd a sweet and innocent lady. For my lord Lack-beard, there, he and I shall meet; and till then, peace be with him.

[*Exit* BENEDICK.

D. Pedro. He is in earnest.

Claud. In most profound earnest; and, I'll warrant you, for the love of Beatrice.

D. Pedro. And hath challeng'd thee?

Claud. Most sincerely.

D. Pedro. What a pretty thing man is, when he goes in his doublet and hose, and leaves off his wit!

Claud. He is then a giant to an ape: but then is an ape a doctor to such a man.

D. Pedro. But, soft you; let me be: pluck up, my heart, and be sad![15] Did he not say my brother was fled?

[15] That is, "rouse thyself, my heart, and be prepared for serious consequences."

Enter DOGBERRY, VERGES, *and Watchmen, with* CONRADE *and* BORACHIO.

Dogb. Come you, sir: if justice cannot tame you, she shall ne'er weigh more reasons in her balance: Nay, an you be a cursing hypocrite once,[16] you must be look'd to.

D. Pedro. How now! two of my brother's men bound? Borachio, one?

Claud. Hearken after their offence, my lord!

D. Pedro. Officers, what offence have these men done?

Dogb. Marry, sir, they have committed false report; moreover, they have spoken untruths; secondarily, they are slanders; sixth and lastly, they have belied a lady; thirdly, they have verified unjust things; and, to conclude, they are lying knaves.

D. Pedro. First, I ask thee what they have done; thirdly, I ask thee what's their offence; sixth and lastly, why they are committed; and, to conclude, what you lay to their charge?

Claud. Rightly reasoned, and in his own division; and, by my troth, there's one meaning well suited.[17]

D. Pedro. Whom have you offended, masters, that you are thus bound to your answer? this learned constable is too cunning to be understood: What's your offence?

Bora. Sweet prince, let me go no further to mine answer: do you hear me, and let this count kill me I have deceived even your very eyes: what your wisdoms could not discover, these shallow fools have

[16] That is, once for all. See Act i. sc. 1, note 29, of this play. H.

[17] That is, *one meaning put into many different dresses;* the Prince having asked the same question in four modes of speech

brought to light; who, in the night, overheard me confessing to this man, how Don John, your brother, incensed me to slander the lady Hero; how you were brought into the orchard, and saw me court Margaret in Hero's garment; how you disgrac'd her, when you should marry her. My villainy they have upon record; which I had rather seal with my death, than repeat over to my shame. The lady is dead upon mine and my master's false accusation; and, briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villain.

D. Pedro. Runs not this speech like iron through your blood?

Claud. I have drunk poison, whiles he utter'd it.

D. Pedro. But did my brother set thee on to this?

Bora. Yea; and paid me richly for the practice of it.

D. Pedro. He is compos'd and fram'd of treachery:—
And fled he is upon this villainy.

Claud. Sweet Hero! now thy image doth appear
In the rare semblance that I lov'd it first.

Dogb. Come, bring away the plaintiffs: by this time our sexton hath reform'd signior Leonato of the matter. And, masters, do not forget to specify, when time and place shall serve, that I am an ass.

Verg. Here, here comes master signior Leonato, and the sexton too.

Re-enter LEONATO, ANTONIO, *and the Sexton.*

Leon. Which is the villain? Let me see his eyes,
That when I note another man like him,
I may avoid him: Which of these is he?

Bora. If you would know your wronger, look on me.

Leon. Art thou the slave, that with thy breath hast kill'd
Mine innocent child?

Bora. Yea, even I alone.

Leon. No, not so, villain; thou beliest thyself:
Here stand a pair of honourable men,
A third is fled, that had a hand in it. —
I thank you, princes, for my daughter's death:
Record it with your high and worthy deeds:
'Twas bravely done, if you bethink you of it.

Claud. I know not how to pray your patience,
Yet I must speak: Choose your revenge yourself
Impose me [18] to what penance your invention
Can lay upon my sin: yet sinn'd I not,
But in mistaking.

D. Pedro. By my soul, nor I;
And yet, to satisfy this good old man,
I would bend under any heavy weight
That he'll enjoin me to.

Leon. I cannot bid you bid my daughter live;
That were impossible: but, I pray you both,
Possess [19] the people in Messina here
How innocent she died: and, if your love
Can labour aught in sad invention,
Hang her an epitaph upon her tomb,[20]
And sing it to her bones: sing it to-night. —
To-morrow morning come you to my house;
And since you could not be my son-in-law,
Be yet my nephew: My brother hath a daughter,

[18] That is, impose *upon* me.

[19] To *possess* anciently signified to *inform*, to *make acquainted with*. So, in The Merchant of Venice: "I have *possess'd* your grace of what I purpose."

[20] It was the custom to attach, upon or near the tombs of celebrated persons, a written inscription, either in prose or verse, generally in praise of the deceased.

Almost the copy of my child that's dead,
And she alone is heir to both of us.[21]
Give her the right you should have given her cousin,
And so dies my revenge.

Claud. O, noble sir!
Your over-kindness doth wring tears from me.
I do embrace your offer; and dispose
For henceforth of poor Claudio.

Leon. To-morrow, then, I will expect your coming:
To-night I take my leave. — This naughty man
Shall face to face be brought to Margaret,
Who, I believe, was pack'd[22] in all this wrong,
Hir'd to it by your brother.

Bora. No, by my soul, she was not,
Nor knew not what she did, when she spoke to me;
But always hath been just and virtuous,
In any thing that I do know by her.

Dogb. Moreover, sir, which, indeed, is not under white and black, this plaintiff here, the offender, did call me ass: I beseech you, let it be remember'd in his punishment. And, also, the watch heard them talk of one Deformed: they say, he wears a key in his ear, and a lock hanging by it;[23] and borrows money in God's name; the which he hath us'd so long, and never paid, that now men grow hard-hearted, and will lend nothing for God's sake: Pray you, examine him upon that point.

Leon. I thank thee for thy care and honest pains.

[21] It would seem that Antonio's son, mentioned in Act i. sc. 2, must have died since the play began. H.

[22] That is, combined; an accomplice.

[23] It was one of the fantastic fashions of Shakespeare's time to wear a long hanging *lock of hair* dangling by the ear: it is often mentioned by contemporary writers, and may be observed in some ancient portraits. The humour of this passage is in Dogberry's supposing the *lock* to have a *key* to it

Dogb. Your worship speaks like a most thankful and reverend youth; and I praise God for you.

Leon. There's for thy pains.

Dogb. God save the foundation![24]

Leon. Go: I discharge thee of thy prisoner, and I thank thee.

Dogb. I leave an arrant knave with your worship; which, I beseech your worship, to correct yourself, for the example of others. God keep your worship; I wish your worship well: God restore you to health. I humbly give you leave to depart; and if a merry meeting may be wish'd, God prohibit it. — Come, neighbour.

[*Exeunt* DOGBERRY, VERGES, *and Watchmen.*

Leon. Until to-morrow morning, lords, farewell.

Ant. Farewell, my lords: we look for you to-morrow.

D. Pedro. We will not fail.

Claud. To-night I'll mourn with Hero.

[*Exeunt Don* PEDRO *and* CLAUDIO.

Leon. Bring you these fellows on; we'll talk with Margaret,
How her acquaintance grew with this lewd[25] fellow. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. LEONATO'S Garden.

Enter BENEDICK *and* MARGARET, *meeting.*

Bene. Pray thee, sweet mistress Margaret, deserve well at my hands, by helping me to the speech of Beatrice.

[24] A phrase used by those who received alms at the gates of religious houses. Dogberry probably designed to say, "God save the founder."

[25] Here *lewd* has not the common meaning; nor do I think it can be used in the more uncommon sense of *ignorant;* but rather

Marg. Will you, then, write me a sonnet in praise of my beauty?

Bene. In so high a style, Margaret, that no man living shall come over it; for, in most comely truth thou deservest it.

Marg. To have no man come over me? why, shall I always keep below stairs?[1]

Bene. Thy wit is as quick as the greyhound's mouth; it catches.

Marg. And yours as blunt as the fencer's foils, which hit, but hurt not.

Bene. A most manly wit, Margaret; it will not hurt a woman: and so, I pray thee, call Beatrice. I give thee the bucklers.[2]

Marg. Give us the swords; we have bucklers of our own.

Bene. If you use them, Margaret, you must put in the pikes with a vice; and they are dangerous weapons for maids.

Marg. Well, I will call Beatrice to you, who, I think, hath legs. [*Exit* MARGARET

Bene. And therefore will come.

Sings. The god of love,
That sits above,
And knows me, and knows me,
How pitiful I deserve, —

means *knavish, ungracious, naughty*, which are the synonymes used with it in explaining the Latin *pravus* in dictionaries of the sixteenth century.

[1] Theobald proposed to read, *above* stairs; and the sense of the passage seems to require some such alteration: perhaps a word has been lost, and we may read, "Why, shall I always keep *them* below stairs?" Of this passage Dr. Johnson says, "I suppose every reader will find the meaning."

[2] To give the bucklers, was to yield the victory; whereby the victor got his adversary's shield, and kept his own.

I mean, in singing; but in loving, — Leander the good swimmer, Troilus the first employer of panders, and a whole book full of these quondam carpet-mongers, whose names yet run smoothly in the even road of a blank verse, why, they were never so truly turned over and over as my poor self, in love. Marry, I cannot show it in rhyme; I have tried; I can find out no rhyme to "lady" but "baby," an innocent rhyme; for "scorn," "horn," a hard rhyme; for "school," "fool," a babbling rhyme; — very ominous endings: No, I was not born under a rhyming planet, nor I cannot woo in festival terms.[3] —

Enter BEATRICE.

Sweet Beatrice, wouldst thou come when I call'd thee?

Beat. Yea, signior; and depart when you bid me

Bene. O, stay but till then!

Beat. "Then" is spoken; fare you well now: — and yet, ere I go, let me go with that I came for; which is, with knowing what hath pass'd between you and Claudio.

Bene. Only foul words; and thereupon I will kiss thee.

Beat. Foul words is but foul wind, and foul wind is but foul breath, and foul breath is noisome; therefore I will depart unkiss'd.

Bene. Thou hast frighted the word out of his right sense, so forcible is thy wit: But I must tell thee plainly, Claudio undergoes[4] my challenge; and either I must shortly hear from him, or I will

[3] That is, *in choice phraseology.* So mine Host in The Merry Wives of Windsor says of Fenton, "*He speaks holiday.*" And Hotspur, in 1 Henry IV.: "With many holiday and lady terms."

[4] Is under challenge, or now stands challenged, by me.

subscribe him a coward. And, I pray thee now, tell me, for which of my bad parts didst thou first fall in love with me?

Beat. For them all together; which maintain'd so politic a state of evil, that they will not admit any good part to intermingle with them. But for which of my good parts did you first suffer love for me?

Bene. "Suffer love!" a good epithet. I do suffer love, indeed, for I love thee against my will.

Beat. In spite of your heart, I think: alas, poor heart! If you spite it for my sake, I will spite it for yours; for I will never love that which my friend hates.

Bene. Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably.

Beat. It appears not in this confession: there's not one wise man among twenty that will praise himself.

Bene. An old, an old instance, Beatrice, that liv'd in the time of good neighbours:[5] If a man do not erect in this age his own tomb ere he dies, he shall live no longer in monument than the bell rings, and the widow weeps.

Beat. And how long is that, think you?

Bene. Question:[6] — Why, an hour in clamour, and a quarter in rheum: Therefore it is most expedient for the wise (if Don Worm, his conscience, find no impediment to the contrary) to be the trumpet of his own virtues, as I am to myself: So much for praising myself, who, I myself will bear witness, is praise-worthy. And now tell me, how doth your cousin?

[5] That is, when men were not envious, but every one gave another his due.

[6] This phrase seems equivalent to, — "You ask a question indeed!" or, "That is the question!"

Beat. Very ill.

Bene. And how do you?

Beat. Very ill too.

Bene. Serve God, love me, and mend: there will I leave you too, for here comes one in haste.

Enter URSULA.

Urs. Madam, you must come to your uncle. Yonder's old coil[7] at home: it is proved, my lady Hero hath been falsely accus'd, the prince and Claudio mightily abus'd; and Don John is the author of all, who is fled and gone: Will you come presently?

Beat. Will you go hear this news, signior?

Bene. I will live in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eyes;[8] and, moreover, I will go with thee to thy uncle's. [*Exeunt*

SCENE III. The Inside of a Church.

Enter Don PEDRO, CLAUDIO, *and Attendants, with music and tapers.*

Claud. Is this the monument of Leonato?

Atten. It is, my lord.

[7] That is, huge bustle, or stir. *Old* was much used as an augmentative in familiar language, perhaps because things that are *old* have given proof of strength, in having outstood the trial of time. Thus, in The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act i. sc. 4 "Here will be an *old* abusing of God's patience, and the king's English." So, likewise, in Dekker's comedy, "If this be not a good Play the Devil is in it:" "We shall have *old* breaking of necks" And in *Le Bone Florence*, quoted by Boswell: "Gode *olde* fyghtyng was there." H.

[8] Mr. Collier says, — "The Rev. Mr. Barry suggests to me, that the words *heart* and *eyes* have in some way changed places in the old copies" H

Claud. [*Reads.*]

Epitaph.

Done to death[1] by slanderous tongues
Was the Hero that here lies:
Death, in guerdon[2] of her wrongs,
Gives her fame which never dies:
So the life, that died with shame,
Lives in death with glorious fame.

Hang thou there upon the tomb,
Praising her when I am dumb. —

Now, music, sound, and sing your solemn hymn.

Song.

Pardon, goddess of the night,
Those that slew thy virgin knight;[3]
For the which, with songs of woe,
Round about her tomb they go.
Midnight, assist our moan;
Help us to sigh and groan,
Heavily, heavily:
Graves, yawn, and yield your dead,
Till death be uttered,
Heavily, heavily.[4]

[1] This phrase occurs frequently in writers of Shakespeare's time: it appears to be derived from the French phrase, *faire mourir*.

[2] Reward.

[3] *Knight* was a common poetical appellation of virgins in Shakespeare's time; probably in allusion to their being the votarists of Diana, whose chosen pastime was in knightly sports. Thus, in Fletcher's Two Noble Kinsmen, Act v. sc. 1:

"O! sacred, shadowy, cold, and constant queen,
Abandoner of revels, mute, contemplative,
Sweet, solitary, white as chaste, and pure
As wind-fann'd snow, who to thy *female knights*
Allow'st no more blood than will make a blush,
Which is their order's robe." H.

[4] We here give the reading of the quarto, though we confess

Claud. Now, unto thy bones good night!
Yearly will I do this rite.

D. Pedro. Good morrow, masters; put you. torches out:
The wolves have prey'd; and look, the gentle day
Before the wheels of Phœbus, round about
Dapples the drowsy east with spots of grey.
Thanks to you all, and leave us: fare you well.

Claud. Good morrow, masters: each his several way.

D. Pedro. Come, let us hence, and put on other weeds;
And then to Leonato's we will go.

Claud. And Hymen now with luckier issue speeds,
Than this, for whom we render'd up this woe!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. A Room in Leonato's House.

Enter Leonato, Antonio, Benedick, Beatrice, Ursula, *Friar*, *and* Hero.

Friar. Did I not tell you she was innocent?

Leon. So are the prince and Claudio, who accus'd her
Upon the error that you heard debated:

ourselves somewhat puzzled to find its meaning, and on the whole rather doubtful whether it have any. The folio reads,—"Heavenly, heavenly," which seems still more obscure or meaningless. But which Knight and Verplanck retain, explaining *uttered* to mean *put out* or *expelled*, a sense which it sometimes bears, and *heavenly* to mean *by the power of heaven*. In this case the sense jumps well enough with what goes before, but it looks too much like making the passage a hieroglyph. Steevens' explanation is, "till songs of death be uttered;" which makes *heavily* appropriate; but then it gives a sense that can hardly be crushed into agreement with what precedes. Difficult as the meaning is either way, we keep to the reading that has the oldest authority. Mr. Dyce justly urges against the reading of the folio, that it gives a

But Margaret was in some fault for this;
Although against her will, as it appears
In the true course of all the question.

Ant. Well, I am glad that all things sort so well.

Bene. And so am I, being else by faith enforc'd
To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.

Leon. Well, daughter, and you gentlewomen all,
Withdraw into a chamber by yourselves;
And, when I send for you, come hither mask'd:
The prince and Claudio promis'd by this hour
To visit me. — You know your office, brother;
You must be father to your brother's daughter,
And give her to young Claudio. [*Exeunt Ladies*

Ant. Which I will do with confirm'd countenance

Bene. Friar, I must entreat your pains, I think.

Friar. To do what, signior?

Bene. To bind me, or undo me; one of them.
Signior Leonato, truth it is, good signior,
Your niece regards me with an eye of favour.

Leon. That eye my daughter lent her: 'tis most true.

Bene. And I do with an eye of love requite her.

Leon. The sight whereof, I think, you had from me,
From Claudio, and the prince: But what's your will?

Bene. Your answer, sir, is enigmatical:
But, for my will, my will is, your good will
May stand with ours, this day to be conjoin'd
In the estate of honourable marriage: —
In which, good Friar, I shall desire your help

passage in Hamlet, Act ii. sc. 2, thus: "And indeed, it goes so *heavenly* with my disposition, that this goodly frame the Earth seems to me a steril promontory." And he thinks *heavenly* is as certainly a misprint for *heavily* in one case as in the other. H.

Leon. My heart is with your liking.
Friar. And my help
Here come the prince and Claudio.

Enter Don PEDRO *and* CLAUDIO, *with Attendants*

D. Pedro. Good morrow to this fair assembly.
Leon. Good morrow, prince; good morrow Claudio:
We here attend you: Are you yet determin'd
To-day to marry with my brother's daughter?
Claud. I'll hold my mind, were she an Ethiope.
Leon. Call her forth, brother: here's the Friar ready. [*Exit* ANTONIO
D. Pedro. Good morrow, Benedick: Why, what's the matter,
That you have such a February face,
So full of frost, of storm, and cloudiness?
Claud. I think he thinks upon the savage bull:[1]—
Tush! fear not, man, we'll tip thy horns with gold,
And all Europa shall rejoice at thee;
As once Europa did at lusty Jove,
When he would play the noble beast in love.
Bene. Bull Jove, sir, had an amiable low:
And some such strange bull leap'd your father's cow,
And got a calf in that same noble feat,
Much like to you, for you have just his bleat.

Re-enter ANTONIO, *with the Ladies masked.*

Claud. For this I owe you: here come other reckonings.
Which is the lady I must seize upon?
Leon. This same is she, and I do give you her

[1] Still alluding to the passage quoted from The Spanish Tragedy, in the first scene of the play.

Claud. Why, then she's mine: Sweet, let me see your face.

Leon. No, that you shall not, till you take her hand
Before this Friar, and swear to marry her.

Claud. Give me your hand before this holy Friar
I am your husband, if you like of me.

Hero. And when I liv'd, I was your other wife:
[*Unmasking*
And when you lov'd, you were my other husband.

Claud. Another Hero?

Hero. Nothing certainer:
One Hero died defil'd; but I do live,
And, surely as I live, I am a maid.

D. Pedro. The former Hero! Hero that is dead!

Leon. She died, my lord, but whiles her slander liv'd.

Friar. All this amazement can I qualify;
When, after that the holy rites are ended,
I'll tell you largely of fair Hero's death:
Mean time, let wonder seem familiar,
And to the chapel let us presently.

Bene. Soft and fair, Friar. — Which is Beatrice?

Beat. I answer to that name: [*Unmasking.*] What is your will?

Bene. Do not you love me?

Beat. Why, no; no more than reason.

Bene. Why, then your uncle, and the prince, and Claudio, have been deceived: they swore you did.

Beat. Do not you love me?

Bene. Troth, no; no more than reason.

Beat. Why, then my cousin, Margaret, and Ursula, Are much deceiv'd; for they did swear you did.

Bene. They swore that you were almost sick for me.

Beat. They swore that you were well-nigh dead for me.

Bene. 'Tis no such matter: — Then, you do not love me?

Beat. No, truly, but in friendly recompense.

Leon. Come, cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman.

Claud. And I'll be sworn upon't, that he loves her;

For here's a paper, written in his hand,
A halting sonnet of his own pure brain,
Fashioned to Beatrice.

Hero. And here's another,
Writ in my cousin's hand, stolen from her pocket,
Containing her affection unto Benedick.

Bene. A miracle! here's our own hands against our hearts: — Come, I will have thee; but, by this light, I take thee for pity.

Beat. I would not deny you; but, by this good day, I yield upon great persuasion; and, partly, to save your life, for I was told you were in a consumption.

Bene. Peace! I will stop your mouth.

[*Kissing her.*

D. Pedro. How dost thou, Benedick the married man?

Bene. I'll tell thee what, prince, a college of wit-crackers cannot flout me out of my humour: Dost thou think I care for a satire, or an epigram? No: if a man will be beaten with brains, a' shall wear nothing handsome about him. In brief, since I do purpose to marry, I will think nothing to any purpose that the world can say against it; and therefore never flout at me for what I have said against it; for man is a giddy thing, and this is my conclu

sion. — For thy part, Claudio, I did think to have beaten thee; but, in that[2] thou art like to be my kinsman, live unbruis'd, and love my cousin.

Claud. I had well hop'd, thou wouldst have denied Beatrice, that I might have cudgell'd thee out of thy single life, to make thee a double dealer; which, out of question, thou wilt be, if my cousin do not look exceeding narrowly to thee.

Bene. Come, come, we are friends: — Let's have a dance ere we are married, that we may lighten our own hearts, and our wives' heels.

Leon. We'll have dancing afterwards.

Bene. First, of my word; therefore play, music. — Prince, thou art sad; get thee a wife, get thee a wife: there is no staff more reverend than one tipped with horn.[3]

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. My lord, your brother John is ta'en in flight,
And brought with armed men back to Messina.

Bene. Think not on him till to-morrow: I'll devise thee brave punishments for him. — Strike up, pipers! [*Dance. Exeunt.*

[2] Because.

[3] Divers commentators think there is an allusion here to the staff used in the ancient trial by wager of battle. But Benedick is evidently regarding marriage as a staff, such a support as human infirmity often needs in the walk of life. And because the staff was used to be tipped with horn, he must needs have a final flout at the horn as emblematic of what he has all along regarded as the destiny of married men. Chaucer's Sompnour describes one of his friars as having a "scrippe and tipped staf," and he adds that "his felaw had *a staf tipped with horn*." H.

INTRODUCTION

TO

A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.

A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM was entered in the books of the Stationers' Company, by Thomas Fisher, October 8, 1600. In the course of that year was published a quarto pamphlet of thirty-two leaves, with a title-page reading as follows: "A Midsummer-Night's Dream: As it hath been sundry times publicly acted by the Right honourable, the Lord Chamberlain his servants. Written by William Shakespeare. Imprinted at London for Thomas Fisher, and are to be sold at his shop, at the Sign of the White Hart, Fleetestreet: 1600." Another edition came out the same year, "printed by James Roberts." The play was not printed again till in the folio of 1623, where it stands the eighth in the list of comedies.

Fisher was a publisher, but not a printer; Roberts was both; and the entering of the play to the former seems to argue that he had the copy-right, and that the edition of the latter was unauthorized. Yet, from the agreement of this and the folio in certain misprints, we are brought to infer that Heminge and Condell must have taken Roberts' text in making up their copy for the press In all three of the copies, however, the printing is remarkably clear and accurate for the time, leaving little room for controversy as to the true reading: probably none of the Poet's works has reached us in a more perfect state. As an instance of the general correctness, Knight aptly refers to the Prologue of the Interlude which is carefully mispointed in the original copies; thus showing that either the proof was corrected by the Author, or the printing was from a very clear manuscript. The main difference between the quartos and the folio is, that the latter distinguishes the acts the scenes are not marked in either.

The play is mentioned by Meres in his *Palladis Tamia;* which ascertains that it was made before 1598: and a curious piece of internal evidence renders it highly probable that the writing was *after* 1594. One of the finest passages in the play is in Act ii

sc. 1, where Titania describes the confusion of the seasons, and the evils thence resulting to man and beast; and the description tallies so well with the strange misbehaviour of the weather in 1594, as to leave scarce any room for doubt as to the allusion. The disorderly conduct of the elements that year is thus recorded in Strype's Annals from a discourse at York by Dr. King: "Remember that the spring was very unkind, by means of the abundance of rain that fell. Our July hath been like to a February; our June even as an April: so that the air must needs be infected." Again, after recounting other signs of the divine wrath, the preacher adds,— "And see, whether the Lord doth not threaten us much more, by sending such unseasonable weather, and storms of rain among us: which if we will observe, and compare it with what is past, we may say that the course of nature is very much inverted. Our years are turned upside down: our summers are no summers; our harvests are no harvests; our seed-times are no seed-times. For a great space of time scant any day hath been seen that it hath not rained." To the same effect Mr. Halliwell has produced an extract from the Diary of Dr. Simon Forman, showing how the heavy rains

> "Have every pelting river made so proud,
> That they have overborne their continents."

So that we can hardly choose but conclude that the play, or at least the passage in question, must have been written after the summer of 1594, when the Poet had passed his thirtieth year. And surely, the truth of the allusion being granted, all must admit that passing events and matters of fact were never turned to better account in the service of poetry.

Another passage has been often quoted and discussed as bearing upon the matter in hand. We confess ourselves quite unable to make any thing out of it for that purpose. In Act v. sc. 1, when the parties interested are considering what entertainment shall be made choice of to grace the forthcoming nuptials, the Master of the Revels produces "a brief how many sports are ripe," the third item of which is —

> "The thrice three Muses mourning for the death
> Of learning, late deceas'd in beggary."

Some have regarded this as pointing to the death of Spenser which occurred in 1599; others, as referring to Spenser's Tears of the Muses, which appeared in 1591. The former, of course, could not be the case but upon the supposal that the lines were written in at a revisal, which would rule them out of the question as to when the play was first made. The latter might indeed pass, but for what Theseus says of the performance there designated.

"That is some satire, keen and critical,
Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony:"

a description to which The Tears of the Muses nowise corresponds. Mr. Knight suggests that the passage may refer to Harvey's "keen and critical," but ungenerous attack upon Greene, soon after the death of the latter in 1592: which suggestion, however, he does not himself consider of much value, wherein we cordially agree with him.

Upon the whole, therefore, the best conclusion we can form is, that the play was written somewhere between 1594 and 1598. Yet we have to concur with Mr. Verplanck, that there are some passages which relish strongly of an earlier period; while again there are others that with the prevailing sweetness of the whole have such an intertwisting of nerve and vigour, and such an energetic compactness of thought and imagery, mingled occasionally with the deeper tonings of "years that bring the philosophic mind," as to argue that they were wrought into the structure of the play not long before it came from the press. The part of the Athenian lovers certainly has much that would scarce do credit even to such a boyhood as Shakespeare's must have been. On the other hand, there is a large philosophy in Theseus' discourse of "the lunatic, the lover, and the poet," a noble sagacity in his reasons for preferring the "tedious brief scene of young Pyramus and his love Thisbe," and a bracing freshness and inspiriting hilarity in the short dialogue of the chase, such as the Poet's best years need not blush to have been the father of. Perhaps, however, what seem the defects of the former, the far-fetched conceits and artificial elegances, were wisely designed, in order to invest the part with such an air of dreaminess and unreality as would better sort with the scope and spirit of the piece, and preclude a disproportionate resentment of some naughty acts into which those love bewildered frailties are betrayed. So that we cannot quite go along with the judicious critic last mentioned, in thinking the part in question to have been the remains of a juvenile effort, with which, after a long interval, the heroic personages and some of the fairy scenes were amalgamated or interwoven.

It is hardly to be supposed that this play could have been very successful on the boards. Though unsurpassed and unsurpassable in its kind, such a preponderance of the poetical over the dramatic could scarce have been greatly relished by the same audiences and in the same places where those performances so intensely crowded with dramatic life made their Author "the applause, delight, the wonder of our stage." Notwithstanding, as evidence that the play enjoyed a good share of fame, we may quote a passage from Sir Gregory Nonsense, by Taylor the Water-poet in 1622: "I say it is applausefully written, and commended to posterity, in the Midsummer-Night's Dream. — If we offend, it is with our good

will: We come with no intent but to offend, and show our simple skill." And a manuscript has been discovered in the Library at Lambeth Palace, showing that the play was represented, September 27, 1631, at the house of John Williams, Bishop of Lincoln; the same great but by no means faultless man who was so harshly treated by Laud, and gave the King such crooked counsel in the case of Strafford, and spent his last years in mute sorrow at the death of his royal master, and had his life written by the wise, witty, good Bishop Hacket.

Some hints for the part of Theseus and Hippolyta appear to have been taken from The Knightes Tale of Chaucer, as may be seen by the extracts given in our notes. Chaucer's Legend of Thisbe of Babilon, and Golding's translation of the same story from Ovid, probably furnished the matter for the Interlude. So much as relates to Bottom and his fellows evidently came fresh from nature as she had passed under the Poet's eye. The linking of these clowns in with the ancient tragic tale of Pyramus and Thisbe, so as to draw the latter within the region of modern farce, thus travestying the classic into the grotesque, is not less original than droll. How far it may have expressed the Poet's judgment touching the theatrical doings of his time, perhaps were a question more curious than profitable. The names of Oberon, Titania, and Robin Goodfellow, were made familiar by the surviving relics of Gothic and Druidical mythology; as were also many particulars in their habits, mode of life, and influence in human affairs. Hints and allusions, scattered through many preceding writers, might be produced, showing that the old superstition had been grafted into the body of Christianity, where it had shaped itself into a regular system so as to mingle in the lore of the nursery, and hold an influential place in the popular belief. Some features, or rather some reports of this ancient Fairydom are thus translated into poetry by Chaucer in The Wif of Bathes Tale:

> "In olde dayes of the King Artour,
> Of which that Bretons speken gret honour,
> All was this lond fulfilled of faerie;
> The Elf-quene, with hire joly compagnie,
> Danced ful oft in many a grene mede.
> This was the old opinion as I rede;
> I speke of many hundred yeres ago;
> But now can no man see non elves mo,
> For now the grete charitee and prayeres
> Of limitoures and other holy freres,
> That serchen every land and every streme
> As thikke as motes in the sonne-beme,
> This maketh that ther ben no faeries:
> For ther as wont to walken was an elf,
> Ther walketh now the limitour himself."

But, though Chaucer and others had spoken about the fairy nation, it was for Shakespeare to let them speak for themselves: until he clothed their substances in apt forms, their thoughts in fitting words, they but floated unseen and unheard in the mental atmosphere of his father-land. But for him, we might indeed have heard of them, but not have known them. So that Mr. Hallam is quite right in regarding A Midsummer-Night's Dream as "altogether original in one of the most beautiful conceptions that ever visited the mind of a poet — the fairy machinery. A few before him," he adds, "had dealt, in a vulgar and clumsy manner, with popular superstitions; but the sportive, beneficent, invisible population of air and earth, long since established in the creed of childhood, and of those simple as children, had never for a moment been blended with 'human mortals,' among the personages of the drama." How much Shakespeare did as the friend and saviour of those sweet airy frolickers of the past, from the relentless mowings of Time, has been charmingly set forth by a poet of our own day. We allude to Thomas Hood's delightful poem, The Plea of the Midsummer Fairies.

Coleridge says he is "convinced that Shakespeare availed himself of the title of this play in his own mind, and worked upon it as a dream throughout." And elsewhere he remarks that "the whole of A Midsummer-Night's Dream is one continued specimen of the dramatized lyrical." These observations, both of which spring out of one and the same idea, undoubtedly hit the true centre and life of the performance; and on no other ground can its merits be rightly estimated. This it is that explains and justifies the distinctive features of the work, such as the constant subordination of the dramatic elements, and the free playing of the action unchecked by the laws and conditions of outward fact and reality. A sort of lawlessness is indeed the very law of the piece: the actual order of things giving place to the spontaneous issues and capricious turnings of the mind; the lofty and the low, the beautiful and the grotesque, the worlds of fancy and of fact, all the strange diversities that enter into "such stuff as dreams are made of," every where running and frisking together, and interchanging their functions and properties: so that the whole seems confused, flitting, shadowy, and indistinct, as fading away in the remoteness and fascination of moonlight. The very scene is laid in a sort of dream-land, called Athens indeed, but only because Athens was the greatest beehive of beautiful visions then known; or rather, it lies in an ideal forest near an ideal Athens, — a forest peopled with sportive elves, and sprites, and fairies, feeding on moonlight, and music, and fragrance: a place where nature herself is supernatural; where every thing is idealized, even to the sunbeams and the soil; where the vegetation proceeds by enchantment; and where there is magic in the germination of the seed and secretion of the sap

Great strength of passion or of volition would obviously be out of place in such a performance: it has room but for love, and beauty, and delight, — for whatsoever is most poetical in nature and fancy; and therefore for none but such tranquil stirrings of thought and feeling as may flow out in musical expression: any tuggings of mind or heart, that should ruffle and discompose the smoothnesses of lyrical division, would be quite out of keeping with a dream, especially a midsummer-night's dream, and would be very apt to turn it into something else. The characters, therefore, are appropriately drawn with light, delicate, vanishing touches; some of them being dreamy and sentimental, some gay and frolicsome, and others replete with amusing absurdities, while all are alike dipped in fancy or sprinkled with humour. And for the same reason the tender distresses of unrequited or forsaken love here touch not the moral sense at all, but only at most our human sympathies; for love is represented as but the effect of some visual enchantment, which the king of fairies can undo or suspend, reverse or inspire, at pleasure. The lovers all seem creatures of another mould than ourselves, with barely enough of the fragrance of humanity about them to interest our human feelings, and whose deepest sorrow wears upon its face a flush and play of inward happiness. Even the heroic personages are fitly represented with unheroic aspect: we see them but in their unbendings, when they have daffed their martial robes aside, to lead the train of day dreamers, and have a nuptial jubilee. In their case great care and art were required, to make the play what it has been censured for being, — that is, to keep the dramatic sufficiently under, and lest the law of a part should override the law of the whole. So, likewise, in the transformation of Bottom and the dotage of Titania, all the resources of fancy were needed, to prevent the unpoetical from getting the upper hand, and thus swamping the genius of the piece. As it is, what words can fitly express the effect with which the extremes of the grotesque and the beautiful are here brought together; and how, in their meeting, each passes into the other without leaving to be itself? What an inward quiet laughing springs up and lubricates the fancy at Bottom's droll confusion of his two natures, when he talks, now as an ass, now as a man, and anon as a mixture of both, his thoughts running at the same time upon honey-bags and thistles, the charms of music and of good dry oats! Who but another nature could have so interfused the lyrical spirit, not only with, but into and through a series or cluster of the most irregular and fantastical drolleries? But indeed this embracing and kissing of the most ludicrous and the most poetical, the enchantment under which they meet, and the airy, dream-like grace that hovers over their union, are altogether inimitable and indescribable. In this unparalleled wedlock the very diversity of the elements seems to link them the closer, while this linking in turn heightens that diversity; Titania being thereby

drawn on to finer issues of soul, and Bottom to larger expression of stomach. The union is so very improbable as to seem quite natural: we cannot conceive how any thing but a dream could possibly have married things so contrary; and that they could not have come together save in a dream, is a sort of proof that they *were* dreamed together.

And so, throughout, the execution is in strict accordance with the plan: the play, from beginning to end, is a perfect festival of whatsoever dainties and delicacies poetry may command, — a continued revelry and jollification of soul, where the understanding is put asleep that fancy may run riot, and wanton in unrestrained carousal. The bringing together of four parts so dissimilar as those of the Duke and his warrior Bride, of the Athenian ladies and their lovers, of the amateur players and their woodland rehearsal, and of the fairy bickerings and overreaching; and the carrying of them severally to a point where they all meet and blend in lyrical respondence; — all this is done in the same freedom from the rules that govern the drama of character and life. Each group of persons is made to parody itself into concert with the others, while the frequent intershootings of fairy influence lift the whole into the softest regions of fancy. At last the Interlude comes in as an amusing burlesque on all that has gone before, as in our troubled dreams we sometimes end with a dream that we have been dreaming, and our perturbations sink to rest in the sweet assurance that they were but the phantoms and unrealities of a busy sleep. Ulrici, — whose criticisms generally appear too something, perhaps too profound, to be of much use, — rightly considers this reciprocal parody the basis and centre where the several parts coalesce and round themselves into an organic whole. Yet, as if this vital coherence of all the parts were not enough, the several threads are collected and bound together; the nuptial doings at the close winding up whatsoever might else seem scattered and uncomposed, thus setting a formal knot upon an unity that was real before.

Partly for the reasons already stated, and partly for others that we scarce know how to state, A Midsummer-Night's Dream is a most effectual poser to criticism. Besides that its very essence is irregularity, so that it cannot be fairly brought to the test of rules, the play forms a complete class by itself: literature has nothing else like it; nothing therefore with which it may be compared and its merits adjusted. For the Poet has here exercised powers apparently differing even in kind, not only from those of any other writer, but from those shown in any other of his own writings: elsewhere, if his characters be penetrated with the ideal, their whereabout lies in the actual, and the work may in some measure be judged by that life which it claims to represent: here the whereabout is as ideal as the characters; all is in the land of dreams, — a place for dreamers, not for critics. The whole thing, more

over, swarms with enchantment: all the sweet witchery of Shakespeare's sweet genius is concentrated into it, yet disposed with so subtle and cunning a hand, that we can as little grasp it as get away from it: its charms, like those of a summer evening, are such as we may see and feel, but cannot locate or define; cannot say they are here, or they are there: the moment we yield ourselves up to them, they seem to be every where; the moment we go to master them, they seem to be nowhere.

Though, as already remarked, the characterization be here quite secondary and subordinate, yet the play probably has as much of character as is compatible with so much of poetry. Theseus has been well described as a classic personage drawn with romantic features and expression. The name is Greek; but the nature and spirit are essentially Gothic. Nor does the abundance of classic allusion and imagery in the story call for any qualification here, because whatsoever is taken is thoroughly steeped in the efficacy of the taker. This species of anachronism, common to all modern writers before and during the age of Shakespeare, seems to have risen in part from a comparative dearth of classical learning, which left men to contemplate the heroes of antiquity under the forms into which their own minds and manners were cast. Thus all their delineations became informed with the genius of romance: the condensed grace of ancient character gave way to the enlargement of chivalrous magnanimity and honour, with its "high-erected thoughts seated in the heart of courtesy." Such appears to have been the no less beautiful than natural result of the "small Latin and less Greek," so often smiled and sometimes barked at, by those more skilled in the ancient languages than in the mother-tongue of nature.

Puck is apt to remind one of Ariel, though they have little in common, save that both are supernatural, and therefore live no longer in the faith of reason. Puck is no such sweet-mannered, tender-hearted, music-breathing spirit, there are no such delicate interweavings of a sensitive moral soul in his nature, he has no such soft touches of compassion and pious awe of goodness, as link the dainty Ariel in so sweetly with our best sympathies. Though Goodfellow by name, his powers and aptitudes for mischief are quite unchecked by any gentle relentings of fellow-feeling: in whatsoever distresses he finds or occasions he sees much to laugh at, nothing to pity: to tease and vex poor human sufferers, and then to think "what fools these mortals be," is pure fun to him; and if he do not cause pain, it is that the laws of Fairy dom forbid him, not that he wishes it uncaused. Yet, notwithstanding his mad pranks, we cannot choose but love him, and let our fancy frolic with him, his sense of the ludicrous is so exquisite he is so fond of sport, and so quaint and merry in his mischief: while at the same time such is the strange web of his nature as to keep him morally innocent. It would seem that some of the tricks

once ascribed to him were afterwards transferred to witchcraft. Well do we remember a black spot in the bottom of the old churn over which we have toiled away many an autumnal evening. A red-hot horse-shoe had been thrown in to disbewitch the cream, and had left its mark there. Report told how a certain old woman of the neighbourhood was fretting and groaning the next morning with a terrible burn. Of course she was burnt out of the churn, and, she away, the butter soon came.

But of all the characters in this play, Bottom descends by far the most into the realities of common experience, and is therefore much the most accessible to the grasp of prosaic and critical fingers. It has been thought the Poet meant him as a satire on the envies and jealousies of the green-room, as they had fallen under his keen yet kindly eye. Surely the qualities uppermost in Bottom had forced themselves on his notice long before he entered the green-room. It is indeed curious to observe the solicitude of this Protean actor, and critic, and connoisseur, that all the parts of the forthcoming play may have the benefit of his execution; how great is his concern lest, if he be tied to one, the others may be "overdone or come tardy off;" and how he would fain engross them all to himself, to the end of course that all may succeed to the honour of the stage and the pleasure of the spectators. But Bottom's metamorphosis is the most potent drawer-out of his genius. The sense of his new head-dress stirs up all the manhood within him, and lifts his character into ludicrous greatness at once. Hitherto the seeming a man has made him content to be little better than an ass; but no sooner does he seem an ass than he tries his best to be a man; and all his efforts that way only go to approve the perfect fitness of his present seeming to his former being

Schlegel ingeniously remarks, that "the droll wonder of Bottom's metamorphosis is merely the translation of a metaphor in its literal sense." The turning a figure of speech thus into visible form is a thing only to be thought of or imagined; so that probably no attempt to paint or represent it to the senses can ever succeed. We can bear, we often have to bear, that a man should seem an ass to the mind's eye; but not that he should seem so to the eye of the body. A child, for example, takes great pleasure in fancying the stick he rides to be a horse, when he would be frightened out of his wits were the stick to quicken and expand into an actual horse. In like manner, we often delight in indulging fancies and giving names, when we should be shocked, were our fancies to harden into facts: we enjoy visions in our sleep, that would only disgust or terrify us, should we wake up and find them solidified into things. The effect of Bottom's transformation can scarce be much otherwise, if brought upon the stage. Delightful to think, it is intolerable to look upon: exquisitely true in idea, it has no truth, or even verisimilitude, when reduced to fact; so that, however gladly imagination receives it, sense and understanding revolt at it.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

THESEUS, Duke of Athens.
EGEUS, Father to Hermia.
LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, } in love with Hermia.
PHILOSTRATE, Master of the Revels to Theseus.
QUINCE, a Carpenter.
SNUG, a Joiner.
BOTTOM, a Weaver.
FLUTE, a Bellows-mender.
SNOUT, a Tinker.
STARVELING, a Tailor.

HIPPOLYTA, Queen of the Amazons.
HERMIA, in love with Lysander.
HELENA, in love with Demetrius.

OBERON, King of the Fairies.
TITANIA, Queen of the Fairies.
PUCK, or ROBIN-GOODFELLOW, a Fairy.
PEAS-BLOSSOM, COBWEB, MOTH, MUSTARD-SEED, } Fairies.

PYRAMUS, THISBE, WALL, MOONSHINE, LION, } Characters in the Interlude.

Other Fairies attending their King and Queen.
Attendants on Theseus and Hippolyta.

SCENE, Athens and a Wood not far from it.

MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.

ACT I.

SCENE I. Athens.

A Room in the Palace of THESEUS.

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, PHILOSTRATE, *and Attendants.*

The. Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour
Draws on apace; four happy days bring in
Another moon: but O! methinks, how slow
This old moon wanes! she lingers my desires,
Like to a step-dame, or a dowager,
Long withering out a young man's revenue.
Hip. Four days will quickly steep themselves in nights;
Four nights will quickly dream away the time;
And then the moon, like to a silver bow
New-bent in heaven, shall behold the night
Of our solemnities.
The. Go, Philostrate,
Stir up the Athenian youth to merriments;
Awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth:
Turn melancholy forth to funerals,
The pale companion is not for our pomp.
[*Exit* PHILOSTRATE
Hippolyta, I woo'd thee with my sword,

And won thy love, doing thee injuries;
But I will wed thee in another key,
With pomp, with triumph, and with revelling.

Enter EGEUS, HERMIA, LYSANDER, *and* DEMETRIUS.

Ege. Happy be Theseus, our renowned duke!

The. Thanks, good Egeus: What's the news with thee?

Ege. Full of vexation come I, with complaint
Against my child, my daughter Hermia. —
Stand forth, Demetrius: — My noble lord,
This man hath my consent to marry her. —
Stand forth, Lysander; — and, my gracious duke,
This man hath bewitch'd the bosom of my child:

[1] Steevens set this down as "a misapplication of a modern title." If it be such, Shakespeare is not responsible for it, as Theseus is repeatedly called *duk* in Chaucer's Knight's Tale, to which the Poet was evidently indebted for some of the material of this play. But indeed this application of *duke* to the heroes of antiquity was quite common; the word being from the Latin *dux*, which means a chief or leader of any sort. Thus in 1 Chronicles, i. 51, we have a list of "the *dukes* of Edom." We will subjoin the opening of The Knight's Tale, as illustrating both the matter in hand and the general scope of the Poet's obligations in that quarter:

"Whilom, as olde stories tellen us,
Ther was a duk that highte Theseus.
Of Athenes he was lord and governour,
And in his time swiche a conquerour,
That greter was ther non under the sonne.
Ful many a riche contree had he wonne.
What with his wisdom and his chevalrie,
He conquerd all the regne of Feminie,
That whilom was ycleped Scythia;
And wedded the fresshe quene Ipolita,
And brought hire home with him to his contree
With mochel glorie and gret solempnitee,
And eke hire yonge suster Emelie.
And thus with victorie and with melodie
Let I this worthy duk to Athenes ride,
And all his host in armes him beside" H.

Thou, thou, Lysander, thou hast given her rhymes,
And interchang'd love tokens with my child:
Thou hast by moon-light at her window sung,
With feigning voice, verses of feigning love;
And stol'n the impression of her fantasy
With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gawds, conceits,
Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweet-meats; messengers
Of strong prevailment in unharden'd youth:
With cunning hast thou filch'd my daughter's heart;
Turn'd her obedience, which is due to me,
To stubborn harshness: — And, my gracious duke,
Be it so she will not here before your grace
Consent to marry with Demetrius,
I beg the ancient privilege of Athens;
As she is mine, I may dispose of her;
Which shall be either to this gentleman,
Or to her death; according to our law
Immediately provided in that case.

The. What say you, Hermia? be advis'd, fair maid:
To you your father should be as a god;
One that compos'd your beauties; yea, and one
To whom you are but as a form in wax,
By him imprinted, and within his power
To leave the figure, or disfigure it.
Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

Her. So is Lysander.

The. In himself he is:
But, in this kind, wanting your father's voice,
The other must be held the worthier.

Her. I would my father look'd but with my eyes!

The. Rather your eyes must with his judgment look.

Her. I do entreat your grace to pardon me.
I know not by what power I am made bold;

Nor how it may concern my modesty,
In such a presence here, to plead my thoughts:
But I beseech your grace that I may know
The worst that may befall me in this case,
If I refuse to wed Demetrius.

The. Either to die the death, or to abjure
For ever the society of men.
Therefore, fair Hermia, question your desires,
Know of your youth, examine well your blood,
Whether, if you yield not to your father's choice,
You can endure the livery of a nun;
For aye to be in shady cloister mew'd,
To live a barren sister all your life,
Chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon.
Thrice blessed they, that master so their blood,
To undergo such maiden pilgrimage:
But earthlier happy is the rose distill'd,
Than that which, withering on the virgin thorn,
Grows, lives, and dies, in single blessedness.

Her. So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord.
Ere I will yield my virgin patent up
Unto his lordship; whose unwished yoke [3]
My soul consents not to give sovereignty.

The. Take time to pause: and, by the next new moon,
The sealing-day betwixt my love and me

[2] This reading was first proposed by Capell, that of the old copies being *earthlier happy*. As in the ancient spelling the positive would be *earthlie happie*, it is easy to see how the *r* may have been transposed; such being in fact a very common error of the press. H.

[3] *Lordship* was anciently used for *authority, rule*. Thus Wickliffe's New Testament has *lordship* where the received version has *dominion*. — The folio of 1632 inserted *to* before *whose unwished yoke*, which reading Mr. Collier adopts on the ground that *to* is necessary to the sense, forgetting, apparently, how common it is for *give* to be followed by two objectives H.

For everlasting bond of fellowship;—
Upon that day either prepare to die,
For disobedience to your father's will;
Or else to wed Demetrius, as he would;
Or on Diana's altar to protest,
For aye, austerity and single life.

Dem. Relent, sweet Hermia:—And, Lysander yield
Thy crazed title to my certain right.

Lys. You have her father's love, Demetrius;
Let me have Hermia's: do you marry him.

Ege. Scornful Lysander! true, he hath my love,
And what is mine my love shall render him;
And she is mine; and all my right of her
I do estate unto Demetrius.

Lys. I am, my lord, as well deriv'd as he,
As well possess'd; my love is more than his;
My fortunes every way as fairly rank'd,
If not with vantage, as Demetrius';
And, which is more than all these boasts can be,
I am belov'd of beauteous Hermia:
Why should not I, then, prosecute my right?
Demetrius, I'll avouch it to his head,
Made love to Nedar's daughter, Helena,
And won her soul; and she, sweet lady, dotes,
Devoutly dotes, dotes in idolatry,
Upon this spotted[4] and inconstant man.

The. I must confess, that I have heard so much,
And with Demetrius thought to have spoke thereof;
But, being over-full of self-affairs,
My mind did lose it. But, Demetrius, come;

[4] *Spotted* is wicked, the opposite of *spotless*. So in Cavendish's Metrical Visions: "The *spotted* queen causer of all this strife;" and again: "*Spotted* with pride, viciousnes, and cruelty."

And come, Egeus: you shall go with me;
I have some private schooling for you both.—
For you, fair Hermia, look you arm yourself
To fit your fancies to your father's will;
Or else the law of Athens yields you up
(Which by no means we may extenuate)
To death, or to a vow of single life.—
Come, my Hippolyta: what cheer, my love?—
Demetrius, and Egeus, go along:
I must employ you in some business
Against our nuptial; and confer with you
Of something nearly that concerns yourselves.

Ege. With duty and desire we follow you.

[*Exeunt* THE., HIP., EGE., DEM., *and Train.*

Lys. How now, my love? Why is your cheek so pale?
How chance the roses there do fade so fast?

Her. Belike, for want of rain; which I could well
Beteem[5] them from the tempest of mine eyes.

Lys. Ah me! for aught that I could ever read,
Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth:
But, either it was different in blood;—

Her. O cross! too high to be enthrall'd to low!

[5] Steevens says *beteem* is used in the North of England for *pour out*, and thinks it may have that sense here. But it is more probably used in the sense, not uncommon in the Poet's time, of *permit, afford;* as in The Faery Queene, B. ii. Can. 8, stan. 19:

"So would I, said th' Enchaunter, glad and faine
Beteeme to you this sword, you to defend,
Or ought that els your honour might maintaine."

Likewise, in Golding's Ovid:

"Yet could he not *beteeme*
The shape of anie other bird than egle for to seeme.

The passage in Hamlet is doubtless familiar to all: "So loving to my mother, that he might not *beteem* the winds of heaven visit her face too roughly."

Lys. Or else misgraffed, in respect of years; —
Her. O spite! too old to be engag'd to young!
Lys. Or else it stood upon the choice of friends; —
Her. O hell! to choose love by another's eye!
Lys. Or, if there were a sympathy in choice,
War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it;
Making it momentany [6] as a sound,
Swift as a shadow, short as any dream;
Brief as the lightning in the collied [7] night,
That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven and earth,
And ere a man hath power to say, — Behold!
The jaws of darkness do devour it up:
So quick bright things come to confusion.

[6] An old form of *momentary*. Milton seems to have remembered this passage in his account of the "innumerable disturbances on earth through female snares," Paradise Lost, Book x.:

"For either
He never shall find out fit mate, but such
As some misfortune brings him, or mistake;
Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain,
Through her perverseness, but shall see her gain'd
By a far worse; or, if she love, withheld
By parents; or his happiest choice too late
Shall meet, already link'd and wedlock-bound
To a fell adversary, his hate or shame:
Which infinite calamity shall cause
To human life, and household peace confound."

It did not fall within Milton's purpose to consider that poor woman is a sufferer in these disturbances as well as man: he views her as the cause, not as the victim, of these mischiefs; whereas Shakespeare regards both sexes as subject to them by an edict of Destiny. H.

[7] A word derived from the collieries, and meaning *smutted* or *black*. Shakespeare found few words so far gone but he could regenerate them with his poetical baptism. — *Spleen*, in the next line, means *a fit of passion or violence*; as in King John, Act ii sc. 2:

"This union will do more than battery can,
To our fast-closed gates; for at this match,
With swifter *spleen* than powder can enforce,
The mouth of passage shall we fling wide ope,
And give you entrance"

Her. If, then, true lovers have been ever cross'd,
It stands as an edict in destiny:
Then, let us teach our trial patience,
Because it is a customary cross,
As due to love as thoughts, and dreams, and sighs,
Wishes, and tears, poor fancy's[8] followers.

Lys. A good persuasion: therefore, hear me Hermia
I have a widow aunt, a dowager
Of great revenue, and she hath no child:
From Athens is her house remote seven leagues;
And she respects me as her only son.
There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee;
And to that place the sharp Athenian law
Cannot pursue us: If thou lov'st me, then,
Steal forth thy father's house to-morrow night;
And in the wood, a league without the town,
Where I did meet thee once with Helena,
To do observance to a morn of May,[9]
There will I stay for thee.

[8] The Poet often uses *fancy* for *love*. So, afterwards, in this play: "Fair Helena in *fancy* following me." And again, in the celebrated passage applied to Queen Elizabeth: "In maiden meditation *fancy*-free."

[9] Here again we may perceive that Shakespeare and Chaucer have been together:

> "Thus passeth yere by yere, and day by day,
> Till it felle ones in a morwe of May,
> That Emelie, that fayrer was to sene
> Than is the lilie upon his stalke grene,
> And fressher than the May with floures newe,
> (For with the rose colour strof hire hewe;
> I n'ot which was the finer of hem two,)
> Er it was day, as she was wont to do,
> She was arisen, and all redy dight.
> For May wol have no slogardie a-night.
> The seson priketh every gentil herte,
> And maketh him out of his slepe to sterte,
> And sayth, arise, and *do thin observance*."

Touching the rites of this ancient holiday, — a time that inspired the seraph-souled Chaucer to sing,

Her. My good Lysander!
I swear to thee, by Cupid's strongest bow;
By his best arrow with the golden head;
By the simplicity of Venus' doves;
By that which knitteth souls, and prospers loves;
And by that fire which burn'd the Carthage queen,
When the false Trojan under sail was seen;
By all the vows that ever men have broke,
In number more than ever women spoke;—
In that same place thou hast appointed me,
To-morrow truly will I meet with thee.

Lys. Keep promise, love: Look, here comes Helena.

Enter HELENA.

Her. God speed fair Helena! Whither away?

Hel. Call you me fair? that fair again unsay.
Demetrius loves you, fair:[10] O happy fair!
Your eyes are lode-stars;[11] and your tongue's sweet air

> "O Maye, with all thy floures and thy grene,
> Right welcome be thou, faire freshe May,
> I hope that I some grene here getten may,"—

Stowe informs us how our ancestors were wont to go out into "the sweet meadows and green woods, there to rejoice their spirits with the beauty and savour of sweet flowers, and with the harmony of birds praising God in their kind." But Stubbs, the atrabilious Puritan, in his Anatomie of Abuses, speaks very differently: he accounts for the delight others take in the season thus: "And no marvel, for there is a great lord present among them, as superintendent over their pastimes and sports, namely, Sathan, Prince of Hell" The spirit of the olden time, however, seems to have revived in the great Bard who hath lately joined his brethren. See Wordsworth's Odes to May. H.

[10] *Fair* for fairness, beauty: quite common in writers of Shakespeare's age.

[11] The *lode-star* is the leading or guiding star, that is, the *polar star*. The magnet is for the same reason called the *lode*-stone. The reader will remember Milton's beauty: "The *cynosure* of neighb'ring eyes"

More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear,
When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear.
Sickness is catching; O, were favour[12] so!
Yours would I catch, sweet Hermia, ere I go;
My ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye,
My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.
Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated,
The rest I'll give to be to you translated.
O! teach me how you look; and with what art
You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart.

Her. I frown upon him, yet he loves me still.

Hel. O, that your frowns would teach my smiles such skill!

Her. I give him curses, yet he gives me love.

Hel. O, that my prayers could such affection move!

Her. The more I hate, the more he follows me.

Hel. The more I love, the more he hateth me.

Her. His folly, Helena, is no fault of mine.

Hel. None, but your beauty: 'would that fault were mine!

Her. Take comfort: he no more shall see my face;

Lysander and myself will fly this place.—
Before the time I did Lysander see,
Seem'd Athens as a paradise to me:
O then, what graces in my love do dwell,
That he hath turn'd a heaven into a hell!

Lys. Helen, to you our minds we will unfold
To-morrow night when Phœbe doth behold
Her silver visage in the watery glass,
Decking with liquid pearl the bladed grass,

[12] Countenance, feature.

(A time that lovers' flights doth still conceal,)
Through Athens' gates have we devis'd to steal.
Her. And in the wood, where often you and I
Upon faint primrose beds were wont to lie,
Emptying our bosoms of their counsel sweet,
There my Lysander and myself shall meet:
And thence, from Athens turn away our eyes,
To seek new friends and stranger companies.
Farewell, sweet playfellow: pray thou for us,
And good luck grant thee thy Demetrius!
Keep word, Lysander: we must starve our sight
From lovers' food, till morrow deep midnight.
[*Exit* HERM
Lys. I will, my Hermia.—Helena, adieu:
As you on him, Demetrius dote on you! [*Exit* LYS
Hel. How happy some o'er other some can be!
Through Athens I am thought as fair as she:
But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so;
He will not know what all but he do know;
And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes,
So I, admiring of his qualities.
Things base and vild,[13] holding no quantity,
Love can transpose to form and dignity.
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind;
And therefore is wing'd Cupid painted blind:
Nor hath love's mind of any judgment taste;
Wings, and no eyes, figure unheedy haste:
And therefore is love said to be a child,
Because in choice he is so oft beguil'd.
As waggish boys in game[14] themselves forswear,
So the boy Love is perjur'd every where:
For ere Demetrius look'd on Hermia's eyne,[15]
He hail'd down oaths, that he was only mine;

[13] *Vild* is an old form of *vile*, often used in the Poet's time.
[14] Sport. [15] Eyes.

And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,
So he dissolv'd, and showers of oaths did melt
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight;
Then to the wood will he, to-morrow night,
Pursue her; and for this intelligence
If I have thanks, it is a dear expense:
But herein mean I to enrich my pain,
To have his sight thither and back again. [*Exit*

SCENE II. The same. A Room in a Cottage

Enter SNUG, BOTTOM, FLUTE, SNOUT, QUINCE, *and* STARVELING.

Quin. Is all our company here?

Bot. You were best to call them generally, man by man, according to the scrip.[1]

Quin. Here is the scroll of every man's name which is thought fit, through all Athens, to play in our interlude before the duke and duchess, on his wedding-day at night.

Bot. First, good Peter Quince, say what the play treats on; then read the names of the actors; and so grow to a point.

Quin. Marry, our play is—The most lamentable comedy, and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisby.[2]

[1] Scrip, that is, *script*, from *scriptum*, is a piece of writing, the *scroll* mentioned just afterwards; and will doubtless be intelligible enough to all who have heard or read understandingly of *Texas scrip*. The word still has a place in the language of the Exchange. The *scrip*, meaning a small *sack* for scraps, has another origin. Thus, in As You Like It, Act iii. sc. 2: "Let us make an honourable retreat; though not with bag and baggage, yet with *scrip* and *scrippage*." H.

[2] Probably a burlesque upon the titles of some of our old dramas: thus—"A lamentable Tragedie, mixed full of pleasant mirth, containing the Life of Cambises, king of Percia."

Bot. A very good piece of work, I assure you, and a merry. — Now, good Peter Quince, call forth your actors by the scroll: Masters, spread yourselves.

Quin. Answer, as I call you. — Nick Bottom, the weaver.

Bot. Ready: Name what part I am for, and proceed.

Quin. You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.

Bot. What is Pyramus? a lover, or a tyrant?

Quin. A lover, that kills himself most gallantly for love.

Bot. That will ask some tears in the true performing of it: If I do it, let the audience look to their eyes; I will move storms, I will condole in some measure. To the rest: — Yet my chief humour is for a tyrant: I could play Ercles[3] rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split.

"The raging rocks,
And shivering shocks,
Shall break the locks
Of prison gates:
And Phibbus' car
Shall shine from far,
And make and mar
The foolish fates."

This was lofty! — Now name the rest of the players. — This is Ercles' vein, a tyrant's vein: a lover is more condoling.

Quin. Francis Flute, the bellows-mender.

[3] *Ercles* — *Hercules* — was one of the roarers of the old rude stage. Thus Greene in his Groatsworth of Wit, 1592: "The twelve labours of Hercules have I terribly thundered on the stage." H.

Flu. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. You must take Thisby on you

Flu. What is Thisby? a wandering knight?

Quin. It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

Flu. Nay, faith, let me not play a woman: I have a beard coming.

Quin. That's all one: You shall play it in a mask, and you may speak as small as you will.[4]

Bot. An I may hide my face, let me play Thisby too: I'll speak in a monstrous little voice: — "Thisne, Thisne — Ah, Pyramus, my lover dear! thy Thisby dear, and lady dear!"

Quin. No, no; you must play Pyramus, and Flute, you Thisby.

Bot. Well, proceed.

Quin. Robert Starveling, the tailor.

Star. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. Robert Starveling, you must play Thisby's mother. — Tom Snout, the tinker.

Snout. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. You, Pyramus's father; myself, Thisby's father. — Snug, the joiner, you, the lion's part: — and, I hope, here is a play fitted.

Snug. Have you the lion's part written? pray you, if it be, give it me, for I am slow of study.

Quin. You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but roaring.

Bot. Let me play the lion too: I will roar, that

[4] See The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act i. sc. 1, note 8, where Slender says of Anne Page, — "She has brown hair, and *speaks small* like a woman." This speech of Peter Quince's shows, what is known from other sources, that the parts of women were used to be played by boys, or, if these could not be had, by men in masks. Prynne, the Puritan hero, informs us that female actors appeared on the stage at the Blackfriars as early as 1629. The pious dare-devil comes down upon women's acting with a tempest of wrath; but then he is still harder upon the personating of

I will do any man's heart good to hear me: I will roar, that I will make the duke say, "Let him roar again: let him roar again."

Quin. An you should do it too terribly, you would fright the duchess and the ladies, that they would shriek; and that were enough to hang us all.

All. That would hang us every mother's son.

Bot. I grant you, friends, if that you should fright the ladies out of their wits, they would have no more discretion but to hang us: but I will aggravate my voice so, that I will roar you as gently as any sucking dove; I will roar you an 'twere any nightingale.

Quin. You can play no part but Pyramus: for Pyramus is a sweet-fac'd man; a proper man, as one shall see in a summer's day; a most lovely, gentleman-like man: therefore you must needs play Pyramus.

Bot. Well, I will undertake it. What beard were I best to play it in?

Quin. Why, what you will.

Bot. I will discharge it in either your straw-colour beard, your orange-tawny beard, your purple-in-grain beard, or your French-crown-colour beard, your perfect yellow.[5]

Quin. Some of your French crowns have no hair at all, and then you will play bare-fac'd.[6]—But, masters, here are your parts: and I am to entreat

women by boys and men: he could endure the histrionic art no where but in religion. H.

[5] It seems to have been a custom to stain or dye the beard. So, in Ben Jonson's Silent Woman: "I have fitted my divine and canonist, *dyed their beards* and all." And, in The Alchemist: "He has *dy'd his beard* and all."

[6] This allusion to the *Corona Veneris*, or baldness attendant upon a particular stage of what was then termed the *French* disease, is too frequent in Shakespeare, and is here explained once for all.

you, request you, and desire you, to con them by to-morrow night; and meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the town, by moon-light: there will we rehearse; for if we meet in the city, we shall be dogg'd with company, and our devices known. In the mean time, I will draw a bill of properties,[7] such as our play wants. I pray you, fail not.

Bot. We will meet; and there we may rehearse more obscenely, and courageously. Take pains; be perfect; adieu.

Quin. At the duke's oak we meet.

Bot. Enough: Hold, or cut bow-strings.[8]

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. A Wood near Athens.

Enter a Fairy, and PUCK, *from opposite sides.*

Puck. How now, spirit! whither wander you?

Fai. Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough brier,
Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire,

[7] The *properties* were the furnishings of the stage, the keeper of which is still called the *property*-man. A curious list of them is given by Brome, 1640:

"He has got into our tiring-house amongst us,
And ta'en a strict survey of all our properties;
Our statues and our images of gods,
Our planets and our constellations,
Our giants, monsters, furies, beasts, and bugbears,
Our helmets, shields and vizors, hairs and beards,
Our pasteboard marchpanes, and our wooden pies." H

[8] Capell informs us that this was a common pledge of punctu

I do wander every where,
Swifter than the moon's sphere;[1]
And I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs[2] upon the green:
The cowslips tall her pensioners[3] be;
In their gold coats spots you see:

ality among archers; as we should say,—"I'll be there, *rain* or *shine*." H.

[1] Mr. Collier informs us that "Coleridge, in his lectures in 1818, was very emphatic in his praises of the beauty of these lines: 'the measure,' he said, 'had been invented and employed by Shakespeare for the sake of its appropriateness to the rapid and airy motion of the Fairy by whom the passage is delivered.'" And in his Literary Remains, after analyzing the measure, he speaks of the "delightful effect on the ear," caused by "the sweet transition" from the amphimacers of the first four lines to the trochaic of the next two. An absurd passion for rhymed regularity has caused *moon's* to be usually printed as a dissyllable, *moones*. There is no authority for this: besides, it mars the beauty of the verse; and is quite unnecessary, as the pronouncing of *moon's* naturally occupies the time of a trochee. Coleridge is rather hard upon Theobald for shortening *thorough* into *through*, as he had the authority of the folio and one of the quartos for doing so. But if any confirmation of *thorough* be wanted, we have it in Drayton's imitation of the passage in his Nymphidia, 1619:

"Thorough brake, thorough brier,
Thorough muck, thorough mier,
Thorough water, thorough fier,
And thus goes Puck about it." H

[2] These *orbs* were the verdant circles which the sweet old superstition here so sweetly delineated called fairy-rings, supposing them to be made by the night-tripping fairies dancing their merry roundels. As the ground became parched under the feet of the moonlight dancers, Puck's office was to refresh it with sprinklings of dew, thus making it greener than ever. Science has of course brushed away the charm that once hung about these circles; but we are not aware that it has given any better explanation of them than that of the old superstition. H.

[3] The allusion is to Elizabeth's band of gentlemen *pensioners*, who were chosen from among the handsomest and tallest young men of family and fortune; they were dressed in habits richly garnished with *gold lace*. See The Merry Wives of Windsor Act ii. sc. 2, note 9

These be rubies, fairy favours,
In those freckles live their savours:
I must go seek some dewdrops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.[4]
Farewell, thou lob[5] of spirits; I'll be gone:
Our queen and all her elves come here anon.

Puck. The king doth keep his revels here to night;
Take heed the queen come not within his sight.
For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,
Because that she, as her attendant, hath
A lovely boy, stol'n from an Indian king;
She never had so sweet a changeling:[6]

[4] In the old comedy of Doctor Dodypoll, 1600, an enchanter says:

"'Twas I that led you through the painted meads
Where the light fairies dane'd upon the flowers,
Hanging on every leaf an orient pearl."

[5] It would seem that Puck, though he could "put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes," was heavy and sluggish in comparison with the other fairies: he was the *lubber* of the spirit tribe. Shakespeare's "*lob* of spirits" is the same as Milton's "*lubbar* fiend," thus spoken of in his L'Allegro:

"And he, by friar's lantern led,
Tells how the drudging goblin swet,
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath thresh'd the corn,
That ten day-labourers could not end:
Then lies him down the lubbar fiend,
And, stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength,
And crop-full out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings." H.

[6] A *changeling* was a child taken or given in *exchange;* it being a roguish custom of the fairies, if a child of great promise were born, to steal it away, and leave an ugly, or foolish, or ill-conditioned one in its stead. Thus, in The Faerie Queene, Book i Can. 10, stan. 65:

"From thence a Faery thee unweeting reft,
There as thou sleptst in tender swadling band,

And jealous Oberon would have the child
Knight of his train, to trace the forest wild;
But she, perforce, withholds the loved boy,
Crowns him with flowers, and makes him all her joy
And now they never meet in grove, or green,
By fountain clear, or spangled starlight sheen,[7]
But they do square;[8] that all their elves, for fear,
Creep into acorn cups, and hide them there.

Fai. Either I mistake your shape and making quite,
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite,
Call'd Robin Goodfellow: are you not he,
That frights the maidens of the villagery;
Skims milk; and sometimes labours in the quern,
And bootless makes the breathless housewife churn;
And sometime makes the drink to bear no barm;[10]
Misleads night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?

And her base Elfin brood there for thee left:
Such, men do *chaungelings* call, so chaung'd by Faeries theft."

Sir Thomas Browne, in his Religio Medici. sec. 30, speaking of the devil's practices, says, — "Of all the delusions wherewith he deceives mortality, there is not any that puzzleth me more than the legerdemain of *changelings*." How much comfort this old belief sometimes gave to parents, may be seen from Drayton's Nymphidia:

"When a child haps to be got,
Which after proves an idiot,
When folk perceive it thriveth not;
The fault therein to smother,
Some silly, doating, brainless calf,
That understands things by the half,
Says, that the fairy left this aulf,
And took away the other." H.

[7] Shining.

[8] That is, quarrel. See Much Ado about Nothing, Act i. sc. 1, note 12. H.

[9] A *quern* was a handmill.

[10] *Barm* is *yeast*. Thus, in Holland's Pliny: "Now the froth or *barm*, that riseth from these ales or beers, have a property to keep the skin fair and clear in women's faces." H.

Those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet Puck,
You do their work; and they shall have good luck:
Are not you he?[11]

Puck. Thou speak'st aright,
I am that merry wanderer of the night.
I jest to Oberon, and make him smile,
When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,
Neighing in likeness of a filly foal:
And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl,
In very likeness of a roasted crab;[12]
And, when she drinks, against her lips I bob,
And on her wither'd dew-lap pour the ale.
The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,
Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me;
Then slip I from her bum, down topples she,

[11] That this whole account of Puck was gathered from the popular notions of the time, might be shown from many passages. Thus, in Harsnet's Declaration of Popish Impostures: "And if that the bowl of curds and cream were not duly set out for Robin Goodfellow, the friar, and Sisse the dairy-maid, why, then either the pottage was burnt next day in the pot, or the cheeses would not eurdle, or the butter would not come, or the ale in the fat never would have good head." Likewise, in Scot's Discovery of Witchcraft: "Your grandames' maids were wont to set a bowl of milk for him, for his pains in grinding malt and mustard, and sweeping the house at midnight; — this white bread and milk was his standing fee." See also the preceding quotation from Milton, note 5, the ballad entitled The Merry Pranks of Robin Goodfellow, in Percy's Reliques, and Drayton's Nymphidia; from the latter of which we subjoin one stanza:

> "This Puck seems but a dreaming dolt,
> Still walking like a ragged colt,
> And oft out of a bush doth bolt,
> Of purpose to deceive us;
> And, leading us, makes us to stray
> Long winter nights out of the way,
> And when we stick in mire and clay,
> He doth with laughter leave us." R.

[12] Wild apple.

And "tailor" cries,[13] and falls into a cough;
And then the whole quire hold their hips, and loffe,
And waxen[14] in their mirth, and neeze, and swear
A merrier hour was never wasted there.—
But room, Fairy: here comes Oberon.

Fai. And here my mistress:—'Would that he were gone!

Enter OBERON, *from one side, with his Train, and* TITANIA, *from the other, with hers.*

Obe. Ill met by moon-light, proud Titania.

Tita. What! jealous Oberon? Fairies, skip hence: I have forsworn his bed and company.

Obe. Tarry, rash wanton: Am not I thy lord?

Tita. Then I must be thy lady: but I know
When thou hast stol'n away from Fairy-land,
And in the shape of Corin sat all day,
Playing on pipes of corn, and versing love
To amorous Phillida. Why art thou here,
Come from the farthest steep of India?
But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,
Your buskin'd mistress, and your warrior love,
To Theseus must be wedded; and you come
To give their bed joy and prosperity.

Obe. How canst thou thus, for shame, Titania,
Glance at my credit with Hippolyta,

[13] Dr. Johnson thought he remembered to have heard this ludicrous exclamation upon a person's seat slipping from under him. He that slips from his chair falls as a *tailor* squats upon his board.

[14] *Waxen* seems to be an old plural form of *wax;* the meaning of course being, *increase* in their mirth. Dr. Farmer proposed to read *yexen. Yex* is an old synonyme of *hiccup:* so that the sense in this case would be, they laugh themselves into a hiccuping; which is indeed very good, but by no means such as to warrant the change. The Chiswick editor adopted *yexen:* why he should think that only "a glimmering of sense may be extracted from the passage as it stands in the old copies," is too deep for us H.

Knowing I know thy love to Theseus?
Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night
From Perigenia, whom he ravished?
And make him with fair Æglé break his faith,
With Ariadne, and Antiopa?

Tita. These are the forgeries of jealousy:
And never, since the middle summer's spring,[15]
Met we on hill, in dale, forest, or mead,
By paved fountain, or by rushy brook,
Or on the beached margent of the sea,
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.
Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,
As in revenge, have suck'd up from the sea
Contagious fogs; which, falling in the land,
Have every pelting[16] river made so proud,
That they have overborne their continents:[17]
The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke in vain,
The ploughman lost his sweat; and the green corn
Hath rotted, ere his youth attained a beard:
The fold stands empty in the drowned field,
And crows are fatted with the murrain flock:
The nine men's morris[18] is fill'd up with mud;

[15] *Spring* seems to be here used for *beginning*. The *spring* of day is used for the dawn of day in 2 Henry IV.

[16] A very common epithet with our old writers to signify paltry.

[17] That is, borne down the banks which contain them.

[18] This was a plat of green turf cut into a sort of chess board, for the rustic youth to exercise their skill upon. The game was called nine men's morris, because the players had each nine men, which they moved along the lines cut in the ground, until one side had taken or penned up all those on the other. The game is said to have been brought into England by the Normans, under the name of *merelles*, which meant *counters*, and was corrupted into *morris*.—"The quaint mazes in the wanton green" were where the youths and maidens led their happy dances in the open air, before people were so wise but that they would suffer kind thoughts and tender loves to be cherished by the remembered pleasures of each other's company.

And the quaint mazes in the wanton green,
For lack of tread, are undistinguishable:
The human mortals want; their winter here,[19]
No night is now with hymn or carol blest.
Therefore the moon, the governess of floods,
Pale in her anger, washes all the air,
That rheumatic diseases do abound;
And thorough this distemperature, we see
The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts
Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose:
And on old Hyems' chin, and icy crown,[20]
An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds
Is, as in mockery, set: The spring, the summer,
The childing autumn,[21] angry winter, change

[19] That is, "their winter *being* here," or, "though their winter be here, no night is now," &c. The line is usually pointed thus: "The human mortals want their winter here;" which, though it have the authority of the old copies, can hardly be right, since they *have* winter here, and *want* it away. But, winter being here, what they do want is the evening hymns and carols that are wont to come with it. Theobald proposed *cheer*, which is indeed very plausible; yet we prefer the reading here given, which was proposed by an anonymous author in 1814, and has been adopted by Mr. Knight. H.

[20] The concurrence of all the old copies in the reading here given intimidates us from doing what we wish to do. Mr. Dyce remarks upon the passage, that "*Hyems with a chaplet of summer buds on his* CHIN is a grotesque which must surely startle even the dullest reader." He then quotes from Gifford,—"What child does not see that the line should be,—'And on old Hyems' *thin* and icy crown?'" and adds.—"This correction, requiring only *the change of a single letter*, had been long ago proposed by Tyrwhitt. These authorities and reasons are indeed strong, yet we dare not admit the change. Nor can it well be denied that the old reading has *some* support in the passage so often quoted for that purpose from Golding's Ovid:

'And lastly, quaking for the colde, stood *Winter* all forlorne,
With rugged head as white as dove, and garments all to-torne,
Forladen with the isycles, that dangled up and downe
Upon his gray and *hoarie beard* and snowie *frozen crowne*." H

[21] *Childing* autumn is *fruitful, teeming* autumn; as in the Poet's 97th Sonnet:

Their wonted liveries; and the 'mazed world,
By their increase, now knows not which is which
And this same progeny of evils comes
From our debate, from our dissension;
We are their parents and original.[22]

Obe. Do you amend it then; it lies in you:
Why should Titania cross her Oberon?
I do but beg a little changeling boy,
To be my henchman.[23]

Tita. Set your heart at rest:
The Fairy-land buys not the child of me.
His mother was a votaress of my order:
And, in the spiced Indian air, by night,
Full often hath she gossip'd by my side,
And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,
Marking the embarked traders on the flood;
When we have laugh'd to see the sails conceive,
And grow big-bellied, with the wanton wind;
Which she, with pretty and with swimming gait
Following, (her womb then rich with my young 'squire,)

"The teeming autumn, big with rich increase
Bearing the wanton burden of the prime.' H.

[22] This disorder of the seasons, which Shakespeare with such an array of poetical witchery attributes to the strife between the fairy rulers, is otherwise accounted for by Churchyard, who, broken with age and sorrow, thus speaks of it in his Charity, a poem published in 1595:

"A colder time in world was never seen:
The skies do lour, the sun and moon wax dim;
Summer scarce known, but that the leaves are green.
The winter's waste drives water o'er the brim;
Upon the land great floats of wood may swim.
Nature thinks scorn to do her duty right,
Because we have displeased the Lord of Light." H.

[23] *Henchman* is an attendant, or page: probably from the Anglo-Saxon *hengst*, a horse. Thus, in Chaucer:

"And every knight had after him riding
Three *hensmen*, on him awaiting." H

Would imitate, and sail upon the land
To fetch me trifles, and return again,
As from a voyage, rich with merchandise.
But she, being mortal, of that boy did die;
And for her sake I do rear up her boy,
And for her sake I will not part with him.

Obe. How long within this wood intend you stay?

Tita. Perchance, till after Theseus' wedding-day
If you will patiently dance in our round,
And see our moon-light revels, go with us;
If not, shun me, and I will spare your haunts.

Obe. Give me that boy, and I will go with thee.

Tita. Not for thy fairy kingdom. — Fairies, away:
We shall chide down-right, if I longer stay.
[*Exeunt* TITANIA *and her Train.*

Obe. Well, go thy way: thou shalt not from this grove,
Till I torment thee for this injury. —
My gentle Puck, come hither: Thou remember'st
Since once I sat upon a promontory,
And heard a mermaid, on a dolphin's back,
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,
That the rude sea grew civil at her song;
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,
To hear the sea-maid's music.

Puck. I remember.

Obe. That very time I saw (but thou couldst not)
Flying between the cold moon and the earth,
Cupid all arm'd: a certain aim he took
At a fair vestal throned by the west;
And loos'd his love-shaft smartly from his bow,
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts:
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the watery moon;
And the imperial votaress passed on,

In maiden meditation, fancy-free.
Yet mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell:
It fell upon a little western flower,—
Before milk-white, now purple with love's wound—
And maidens call it love-in-idleness.[24]
Fetch me that flower: the herb I show'd thee once:
The juice of it on sleeping eyelids laid,
Will make or man or woman madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees.
Fetch me this herb: and be thou here again,
Ere the leviathan can swim a league.

Puck. I'll put a girdle round about the earth
In forty minutes. [*Exit* PUCK.

Obe. Having once this juice,
I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes:
The next thing then she waking looks upon,
(Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,
On meddling monkey, or on busy ape,)
She shall pursue it with the soul of love.
And ere I take this charm off from her sight,
(As I can take it with another herb,)
I'll make her render up her page to me.
But who comes here? I am invisible,
And I will overhear their conference.

Enter DEMETRIUS, HELENA *following him.*

Dem. I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.
Where is Lysander, and fair Hermia?
The one I'll stay, the other stayeth me.[25]

[24] The tri-coloured violet, commonly called pansies, or hearts ease, is here meant: one or two of its petals are of a purple colour. It has other fanciful and expressive names, such as—Cuddle me to you; Three faces under a hood; Herb trinity, &c.

[25] Such is the reading of all the old copies; which has been unaccountably changed in modern editions to—"The one I'll

Thou told'st me they were stol'n into this wood,
And here am I, and wood[26] within this wood,
Because I cannot meet my Hermia.
Hence! get thee gone, and follow me no more.

Hel. You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant;[27]
But yet you draw not iron, for my heart
Is true as steel: Leave you your power to draw,
And I shall have no power to follow you.

Dem. Do I entice you? Do I speak you fair?
Or, rather, do I not in plainest truth
Tell you I do not, nor I cannot love you?

Hel. And even for that do I love you the more.
I am your spaniel; and, Demetrius,
The more you beat me, I will fawn on you:
Use me but as your spaniel, spurn me, strike me,
Neglect me, lose me; only give me leave,
Unworthy as I am, to follow you.
What worser place can I beg in your love,
(And yet a place of high respect with me,)
Than to be used as you use your dog?

Dem. Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit
For I am sick, when I do look on thee.

Hel. And I am sick, when I look not on you.

Dem. You do impeach your modesty too much,
To leave the city, and commit yourself
Into the hands of one that loves you not;

slay, the other *slayeth* me;" thus making *the one* refer to Lysander, *the other* to Hermia. The meaning plainly is,—The one (Hermia) I'll *stop*, the other (Lysander) *hindereth* me. H.

[26] *Wood* is an old word for *frantic, mad.* See The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act. ii. sc. 3, note 4. H.

[27] "There is now a dayes a kind of *adamant* which draweth into it fleshe, and the same so strongly, that it hath power to knit and tie together two mouthes of contrary persons, and drawe the heart of a man out of his bodie without offending any part of him." Certaine Secrete Wonders of Nature. by Edward Fenton 1569.

To trust the opportunity of night,
And the ill counsel of a desert place,
With the rich worth of your virginity.

Hel. Your virtue is my privilege for that.
It is not night, when I do see your face;
Therefore I think I am not in the night:
Nor doth this wood lack worlds of company;
For you, in my respect, are all the world:
Then how can it be said I am alone,
When all the world is here to look on me?

Dem. I'll run from thee, and hide me in the brakes,
And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts.

Hel. The wildest hath not such a heart as you.
Run when you will, the story shall be chang'd;
Apollo flies, and Daphne holds the chase:
The dove pursues the griffin; the mild hind
Makes speed to catch the tiger: Bootless speed!
When cowardice pursues, and valour flies.

Dem. I will not stay thy questions; let me go:
Or, if thou follow me, do not believe
But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.

Hel. Ay, in the temple, in the town, the field,
You do me mischief. Fie, Demetrius!
Your wrongs do set a scandal on my sex:
We cannot fight for love, as men may do;
We should be woo'd, and were not made to woo.
I'll follow thee, and make a heaven of hell,
To die upon the hand I love so well.

[*Exeunt* DEM. *and* HEL.

Obe. Fare thee well, nymph: ere he do leave
this grove,
Thou shalt fly him, and he shall seek thy love

Re-enter PUCK.

Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer

Puck. Ay, there it is.

Obe. I pray thee, give it me.
I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
Where ox-lips, and the nodding violet grows;
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine:
There sleeps Titania, some time of the night,
Lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight;
And there the snake throws her enamell'd skin,
Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in:
And with the juice of this I'll streak her eyes,
And make her full of hateful fantasies.
Take thou some of it, and seek through this grove:
A sweet Athenian lady is in love
With a disdainful youth: anoint his eyes;
But do it, when the next thing he espies
May be the lady: Thou shalt know the man
By the Athenian garments he hath on
Effect it with some care, that he may prove
More fond on her, than she upon her love:
And look thou meet me ere the first cock crow.

Puck. Fear not, my lord: your servant shall do so. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. Another part of the Wood.

Enter TITANIA, *with her Train.*

Tita. Come, now a roundel, and a fairy song;
Then, for the third part of a minute, hence:
Some, to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds,
Some war with rear-mice[1] for their leathern wings,
To make my small elves coats; and some keep back

[1] Bats.

The clamorous owl, that nightly hoots, and wonders
At our quaint spirits: Sing me now asleep;
Then to your offices, and let me rest.

Fairies' Song.

1 *Fai.* You spotted snakes, with double tongue,
Thorny hedge-hogs, be not seen;
Newts, and blindworms, do no wrong·
Come not near our fairy queen:

Chorus. Philomel, with melody,
Sing in our sweet lullaby;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla, lulla, lullaby.
Never harm, nor spell nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh;
So, good night, with lullaby.

II.

2 *Fai.* Weaving spiders, come not here;
Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence:
Beetles black, approach not near;
Worm, nor snail, do no offence.

Chorus. Philomel, with melody, &c.

1 *Fai.* Hence, away! now all is well
One, aloof, stand sentinel.
[*Exeunt Fairies.* TITANIA *sleeps.*

Enter OBERON.

Obe What thou seest, when thou dost wake,
[*Squeezes the flower on* TITANIA'S *eyelids*
Do it for thy true love take;
Love, and langnish for his sake:
Be it ounce, or cat, or bear,
Pard, or boar with bristled hair,

In thy eye that shall appear
When thou wak'st, it is thy dear;
Wake, when some vile thing is near. [*Exit.*

Enter LYSANDER *and* HERMIA.

Lys. Fair love, you faint with wandering in the wood;
And, to speak troth, I have forgot our way:
We'll rest us, Hermia, if you think it good,
And tarry for the comfort of the day.

Her. Be it so, Lysander: find you out a bed,
For I upon this bank will rest my head.

Lys. One turf shall serve as pillow for us both;
One heart, one bed, two bosoms, and one troth.

Her. Nay, good Lysander; for my sake, my dear,
Lie further off yet; do not lie so near.

Lys. O! take the sense, sweet, of my innocence;[2]
Love takes the meaning, in love's conference.
I mean, that my heart unto yours is knit,
So that but one heart we can make of it:
Two bosoms interchained with an oath;
So then, two bosoms, and a single troth.
Then, by your side no bed-room me deny;
For, lying so, Hermia, I do not lie.

Her. Lysander riddles very prettily:—
Now much beshrew my manners and my pride,
If Hermia meant to say Lysander lied.
But, gentle friend, for love and courtesy
Lie further off; in human modesty
Such separation as may well be said
Becomes a virtuous bachelor and a maid;

[2] That is, understand *the meaning of my innocence*, or my *innocent meaning*. Let no suspicion of ill enter thy mind. In the conversation of those who are assured of each other's kindness, not *suspicion* but *love takes the meaning*.

So far be distant; and good night, sweet friend:
Thy love ne'er alter, till thy sweet life end!

Lys. Amen, amen, to that fair prayer, say I;
And then end life, when I end loyalty!
Here is my bed: Sleep give thee all his rest!

Her. With half that wish the wisher's eyes be press'd! [*They sleep.*

Enter PUCK.

Puck. Through the forest have I gone,
But Athenian found I none,
On whose eyes I might approve
This flower's force in stirring love.
Night and silence! who is here?
Weeds of Athens he doth wear:
This is he, my master said,
Despised the Athenian maid;
And here the maiden, sleeping sound
On the dank and dirty ground.
Pretty soul! she durst not lie
Near this lack-love, this kill-courtesy.
Churl, upon thy eyes I throw
All the power this charm doth owe:[3]
When thou wak'st, let love forbid
Sleep his seat on thy eye-lid.
So, awake when I am gone;
For I must now to Oberon. [*Exit*

Enter DEMETRIUS *and* HELENA, *running.*

Hel. Stay, though thou kill me, sweet Demetrius.

Dem. I charge thee, hence! and do not haunt me thus.

Hel. O! wilt thou darkling leave me?[4] do not so

[3] Own.

[4] That is, "wilt thou leave me in the dark?" H.

Dem. Stay, on thy peril: I alone will go.
[*Exit* DEMETRIUS

Hel. O, I am out of breath in this fond chase!
The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace.
Happy is Hermia, wheresoe'er she lies;
For she hath blessed and attractive eyes.
How came her eyes so bright? Not with salt tears
If so, my eyes are oftener wash'd than hers.
No, no, I am as ugly as a bear;
For beasts that meet me run away for fear:
Therefore, no marvel, though Demetrius
Do, as a monster, fly my presence thus.
What wicked and dissembling glass of mine
Made me compare with Hermia's sphery eyne?
But who is here? — Lysander on the ground!
Dead, or asleep? I see no blood, no wound: —
Lysander, if you live, good sir, awake.

Lys. [*Waking.*] And run through fire I will, for thy sweet sake.
Transparent Helena! Nature shows her art,[b]
That through thy bosom makes me see thy heart.
Where is Demetrius? O, how fit a word
Is that vile name to perish on my sword!

Hel. Do not say so, Lysander; say not so:
What though he love your Hermia! Lord, what though!
Yet Hermia still loves you: then be content.

Lys. Content with Hermia? No: I do repent
The tedious minutes I with her have spent.
Not Hermia, but Helena I love:
Who will not change a raven for a dove?

[b] The quartos have only — "Nature shows art." The first folio — "Nature *her* shows art." The second folio changes *her* to *here*. Malone thought we should read, "Nature shows *her* art"

The will of man is by his reason sway'd,
And reason says you are the worthier maid.[6]
Things growing are not ripe until their season:
So I, being young, till now ripe not to reason;
And touching now the point of human skill,
Reason becomes the marshal to my will,
And leads me to your eyes; where I o'erlook
Love's stories written in love's richest book.

Hel. Wherefore was I to this keen mockery born?
When, at your hands, did I deserve this scorn?
Is't not enough, is't not enough, young man,
That I did never, no, nor never can,
Deserve a sweet look from Demetrius' eye,
But you must flout my insufficiency?
Good troth, you do me wrong; good sooth, you do,
In such disdainful manner me to woo.
But fare you well: perforce I must confess,
I thought you lord of more true gentleness.
O, that a lady, of one man refus'd,
Should, of another, therefore be abus'd! [*Exit.*

Lys. She sees not Hermia. — Hermia, sleep thou there;
And never may'st thou come Lysander near!
For, as a surfeit of the sweetest things
The deepest loathing to the stomach brings;
Or, as the heresies, that men do leave,
Are hated most of those they did deceive;
So thou, my surfeit, and my heresy,
Of all be hated; but the most of me!

[6] Though this play be but a dream, Lysander shows a good deal of human nature, as it is when awake, or claiming to be so, in thus attributing to riper reason a change wrought in his vision by enchantment. The bewitching juice only develops a "higher law" in him. And in like sort it often happens that men, mistaking change for progress, grow the more opinionated for their frequent changes of opinion, thus turning the natural arguments of modesty into a basis of conceit. H.

And, all my powers, address your love and might,
To honour Helen, and to be her knight! [*Exit.*

Her. [*Starting.*] Help me, Lysander, help me! do thy best,
To pluck this crawling serpent from my breast!
Ah me, for pity! — what a dream was here!
Lysander, look, how I do quake with fear:
Methought a serpent eat my heart away,
And you sat smiling at his cruel prey: —
Lysander! what, remov'd? Lysander! lord!
What, out of hearing? gone? no sound, no word?
Alack! where are you? speak, an if you hear;
Speak, of all loves![7] I swoon almost with fear.
No? — then I well perceive you are not nigh:
Either death, or you, I'll find immediately. [*Exit*

ACT III.

SCENE I. The same.

The Queen of Fairies lying asleep.

Enter QUINCE, SNUG, BOTTOM, FLUTE, SNOUT, *and* STARVELING.

Bot. Are we all met?

Quin. Pat, pat; and here's a marvellous convenient place for our rehearsal: This green plot shall be our stage, this hawthorn brake our 'tiring-house; and we will do it in action, as we will do it before the duke.

[7] A proverbial phrase, equivalent to our "by all means." See The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act. ii. sc. 2, note 11. H.

Bot. Peter Quince, —

Quin. What say'st thou, bully Bottom?

Bot. There are things in this comedy of Pyramus and Thisby, that will never please. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill himself; which the ladies cannot abide. How answer you that?

Snout. By'rlakin,[1] a parlous[2] fear.

Star. I believe we must leave the killing out, when all is done.

Bot. Not a whit: I have a device to make all well. Write me a prologue; and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our swords; and that Pyramus is not kill'd indeed: and, for the more better assurance, tell them, that I Pyramus am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver: This will put them out of fear.

Quin. Well, we will have such a prologue; and it shall be written in eight and six.[3]

Bot. No, make it two more; let it be written in eight and eight.

Snout. Will not the ladies be afeard of the lion?

Star. I fear it, I promise you.

Bot. Masters, you ought to consider with yourselves: to bring in, God shield us! a lion among ladies, is a most dreadful thing; for there is not a more fearful wild-fowl than your lion living, and we ought to look to it.

Snout. Therefore, another prologue must tell he is not a lion.

Bot. Nay, you must name his name, and half his face must be seen through the lion's neck; and

[1] That is, by our ladykin, or little lady, as *i'fakins* is a corruption of *by my faith*.

[2] Corrupted from *perilous*.

[3] That is, in alternate verses of eight and six syllables.

he himself must speak through, saying thus, or to the same defect: — "Ladies, or fair ladies, I would wish you, or, I would request you, or, I would entreat you, not to fear, not to tremble: my life for yours. If you think I come hither as a lion, it were pity of my life: No, I am no such thing; I am a man as other men are:" and there, indeed, let him name his name; and tell them plainly he is Snug the joiner.[4]

Quin. Well, it shall be so. But there is two hard things: that is, to bring the moon-light into a chamber; for you know, Pyramus and Thisby meet by moon-light.

Snug. Doth the moon shine that night we play our play?

Bot. A calendar, a calendar! look in the almanack; find out moon-shine, find out moon-shine.

Quin. Yes, it doth shine that night.

Bot. Why, then you may leave a casement of the great chamber window, where we play, open; and the moon may shine in at the casement.

Quin. Ay; or else one must come in with a bush of thorns and a lanthorn, and say he comes to disfigure, or to present, the person of moon-shine. Then, there is another thing: we must have a wall in the

[4] Shakespeare may here allude to an incident said to have occurred in his time, which is recorded in a collection entitled Merry Passages and Jests: "There was a spectacle presented to Queen Elizabeth upon the water, and among others Harry Goldingham was to represent Arion upon the Dolphin's backe; but finding his voice to be verye hoarse and unpleasant when he came to perform it, he tears off his disguise, and swears he was none of Arion, not he, but even honest Harry Goldingham; which blunt discoverie pleased the queen better than if he had gone through in the right way: — yet he could order his voice to an instrument exceeding well."

great chamber; for Pyramus and Thisby, says the story, did talk through the chink of a wall.

Snug. You never can bring in a wall. — What say you, Bottom?

Bot. Some man or other must present wall: and let him have some plaster, or some loam, or some rough-cast about him, to signify wall; or let him hold his fingers thus, and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisby whisper.

Quin. If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit down, every mother's son, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you begin: when you have spoken your speech, enter into that brake; and so every one according to his cue.

Enter PUCK *behind.*

Puck. What hempen home-spuns have we swaggering here,
So near the cradle of the fairy queen?
What, a play toward? I'll be an auditor;
An actor, too, perhaps, if I see cause.

Quin. Speak, Pyramus: — Thisby, stand forth.

Pyr. "Thisby, the flowers of odious savours sweet,"—

Quin. Odours, odours.

Pyr. ——"odours savours sweet:
So hath thy breath, my dearest Thisby dear. —
But, hark, a voice! stay thou but here a while,
And by and by I will to thee appear." [*Exit.*

Puck. [*Aside.*] A stranger Pyramus than e'er play'd here! [*Exit.*

This. Must I speak now?

Quin. Ay, marry, must you: for you must understand, he goes but to see a noise that he heard, and is to come again.

This. "Most radiant Pyramus, most lily-white of hue,
Of colour like the red rose on triumphant brier,
Most brisky juvenal,[5] and eke most lovely Jew,
As true as truest horse, that yet would never tire,
I'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb."

Quin. Ninus' tomb, man: Why you must not speak that yet; that you answer to Pyramus: you speak all your part at once, cues[6] and all. — Pyramus, enter: your cue is past; it is, "never tire."

Re-enter PUCK, *and* BOTTOM *with an ass's head.*

This. O! — "As true as truest horse that yet would never tire."

Pyr. "If I were, fair Thisby, I were only thine."—

Quin. O monstrous! O strange! we are haunted. Pray, masters! fly, masters! help! [*Exeunt Clowns.*

Puck. I'll follow you, I'll lead you about a round,
Through bog, through bush, through brake, through brier:
Sometime a horse I'll be, sometime a hound,
A hog, a headless bear, sometime a fire;
And neigh, and bark, and grunt, and roar, and burn,
Like horse, hound, hog, bear, fire, at every turn.[7]
[*Exit.*

[5] Young man

[6] The *cues* were the last words of the preceding speech, which served as a hint to him who was to speak next.

[7] The Protean versatility of Puck is celebrated in whatsoever has come down to us respecting him. Thus, in an old tract entitled Robin Goodfellow, his Mad Pranks and Merry Jests, reprinted by the Percy Society, and quoted by Mr. Collier:

"Thou hast the power to change thy shape
To horse, to hog, to dog, to ape."

And, in a ballad given in the Introduction to the same tract:

"Sometimes a walking fire he'd be,
And lead them from their way."

So, too, in the ballad referred to in Act ii. sc. 1, note 11, which we give entire at the end of the play

Bot. Why do they run away? this is a knavery of them, to make me afeard.

Re-enter SNOUT.

Snout. O Bottom, thou art chang'd! what do I see on thee? [*Exit.*

Bot. What do you see? you see an ass's head of your own, do you?

Re-enter QUINCE.

Quin. Bless thee, Bottom! bless thee! thou art translated. [*Exit.*

Bot. I see their knavery! this is to make an ass of me; to fright me, if they could. But I will not stir from this place, do what they can: I will walk up and down here, and I will sing, that they shall hear I am not afraid. [*Sings.*

The ousel cock, so black of hue,
With orange-tawney bill,[8]

[8] In the opinion of some commentators, the Poet or Bottom is a little out here in his ornithology. This opinion has probably arisen from a change in the use of the name since Shakespeare's day; *ousel* being then used to denote the *blackbird*, as is evident from the Thirteenth Song of Drayton's Poly-Olbion:

"The *woosel* near at hand, that hath a golden bill,
As nature him had mark'd of purpose t' let us see
That from all other birds his tunes should different be;
For with their vocal sounds they sing to pleasant May;
Upon his dulcet pipe the *merle* doth only play."

And in a note upon this passage he adds.—"Of all birds the *blackbird* only whistleth;" thus showing that the *ousel*, the *merle* and the *blackbird* were all one. Bottom's *orange-tawney* bill accords with what Yarrell says of the blackbird: "The beak and the edges of the eyelids in the adult male are *gamboge yellow*." The *whistling* of the blackbird is thus spoken of in Spenser's Epithalamion:

"The merry Larke hir mattins sings aloft;
The Thrush replyes; the Mavis descant playes;
The *Ouzell shrills*: the Ruddock warbles soft."

The throstle with his note so true,
The wren with little quill;—

Tita. [*Waking.*] What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?

Bot. The finch, the sparrow, and the lark,
The plain-song cuckoo[9] grey,
Whose note full many a man doth mark,
And dares not answer, nay;—

for, indeed, who would set his wit to so foolish a bird? who would give a bird the lie, though he cry "cuckoo," never so?

Tita. I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again:
Mine ear is much enamour'd of thy note,
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape;
And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me,
On the first view, to say, to swear, I love thee.

Bot. Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason for that: and yet, to say the truth, reason and love keep little company together nowadays: The more the pity, that some honest neighbours will not make them friends. Nay, I can gleek[10] upon occasion.

Tita. Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

Bot. Not so, neither: but if I had wit enough to

[9] The *plain-song* was used for the simple *air* or *ground* in music, to distinguish it from the tenor, which was called *mean*, and from the variations, which were called descant. See The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act i. sc. 2, note 7. Thus, also, in Ben Jonson's Every Man out of His Humour, Act iii. sc. 3: "Are these the admired lady-wits, that having so good a *plain-song* can run no better division upon it? All her jests are of the stamp March was fifteen years ago." The cuckoo is called *plain-song* as having no variety of note, but singing in a monotone, after the manner of the ancient simple *chant*. H.

[10] Bottom is chuckling over the wit he has just vented. *Gleek* is from the Anglo-Saxon *glig*, and means *catch, entrap, play upon*, *scoff at*. So says Richardson. *Glee* is from the same original.

get out of this wood, I have enough to serve mine own turn.

Tita. Out of this wood do not desire to go:
Thou shalt remain here, whether thou wilt or no
I am a spirit of no common rate;
The summer still doth tend upon my state;
And I do love thee: therefore, go with me:
I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee;
And they shall fetch thee jewels from the deep,
And sing, while thou on pressed flowers dost sleep:
And I will purge thy mortal grossness so,
That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.—
Peas-blossom! Cobweb! Moth! and Mustard-seed!

Enter four Fairies

1 *Fai.* Ready.
2 *Fai.* And I.
3 *Fai.* And I.
4 *Fai.* Where shall we go?

Tita. Be kind and courteous to this gentleman;
Hop in his walks, and gambol in his eyes;
Feed him with apricocks and dewberries,
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries:
The honey bags steal from the humble-bees,
And, for night tapers, crop their waxen thighs,
And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,[11]
To have my love to bed, and to arise;
And pluck the wings from painted butterflies,
To fan the moon-beams from his sleeping eyes:
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.

1 *Fai.* Hail, mortal!

[11] Dr. Johnson informs us, in a note upon this passage, that the glow-worm's light is in his tail, not his eyes. What a pity it is the Poet did not know this! as he might then have written,—"And light them at the fiery glow-worm's *tail*." H.

2 *Fai.* Hail!

3 *Fai.* Hail!

4 *Fai.* Hail!

Bot. I cry your worship's mercy, heartily. — I beseech, your worship's name?

Cob. Cobweb.

Bot. I shall desire you of more acquaintance,[12] good master Cobweb: If I cut my finger, I shall make bold with you. — Your name, honest gentleman?

Peas. Peas-blossom.

Bot. I pray you, commend me to mistress Squash,[13] your mother, and to master Peascod, your father. Good master Peas-blossom, I shall desire you of more acquaintance too. — Your name, I beseech you, sir?

Mus. Mustard-seed.

Bot. Good master Mustard-seed, I know your patience[14] well: that same cowardly, giant-like ox-beef hath devoured many a gentleman of your house. I promise you, your kindred hath made my eyes water ere now. I desire you more acquaintance, good master Mustard-seed.

Tita. Come, wait upon him: lead him to my bower.
The moon, methinks, looks with a watery eye;

[12] This kind of phraseology was not uncommon. In Lusty Juventus, a Morality, we have: "I shall desire *you of* better acquaintance." And, in A Humorous Day's Mirth, 1599: "I do desire *you of* more acquaintance."

[13] A *squash* is an immature peascod.

[14] That is, your patience in suffering "that same cowardly, giant-like ox-beef" to devour "many a gentleman of your house." Mason proposed to read, — "I know you *passing well*;" but the proposal has been rejected on the ground that Bottom here intends a dit of irony on the supposed virtue of mustard in making the eaters choleric! H.

And when she weeps, weeps every little flower,
Lamenting some enforced chastity.
Tie up my lover's tongue, bring him silently.

[*Exeunt*

SCENE II. Another part of the Wood.

Enter OBERON.

Obe. I wonder, if Titania be awak'd;
Then, what it was that next came in her eye,
Which she must dote on in extremity.

Enter PUCK.

Here comes my messenger.—How now, mad spirit?
What night-rule [1] now about this haunted grove?

Puck. My mistress with a monster is in love.
Near to her close and consecrated bower,
While she was in her dull and sleeping hour.
A crew of patches,[2] rude mechanicals,
That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,
Were met together to rehearse a play,
Intended for great Theseus' nuptial day.
The shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort,
Who Pyramus presented, in their sport
Forsook his scene, and enter'd in a brake:
When I did him at this advantage take,

[1] Night-*rule* is such rule as is apt to govern in the *night*; that is, *revelry*. H.

[2] *Patch* was sometimes used for *fool*, probably because of the "motley gear" worn by professed fools. Thus, in The Comedy of Errors, Act iii. sc. 1:

"Mome, malt-horse, capon, coxcomb, idiot, *patch!*
Either get thee from the door, or sit down at the hatch."

Richardson, however, says the word, applied to a person, means "one who wears or assumes false or deceitful appearances; a rogue, a knave; and hence, contemptuously, any low or despised character." H

An ass's nowl [3] I fixed on his head;
Anon, his Thisbe must be answered,
And forth my mimic comes: When they him spy,
As wild geese that the creeping fowler eye,
Or russet-pated choughs, many in sort,[4]
Rising and cawing at the gun's report,
Sever themselves, and madly sweep the sky,
So, at his sight, away his fellows fly:
And, at our stamp, here o'er and o'er one falls;
He murder cries, and help from Athens calls.
Their sense, thus weak, lost with their fears, thus strong,
Made senseless things begin to do them wrong:
For briers and thorns at their apparel snatch;
Some, sleeves, some, hats, from yielders all things catch.
I led them on in this distracted fear,
And left sweet Pyramus translated there:
When in that moment (so it came to pass)
Titania wak'd, and straightway lov'd an ass.

Obe. This falls out better than I could devise.
But hast thou yet latch'd [5] the Athenian's eyes
With the love-juice, as I did bid thee do?

Puck. I took him sleeping, — that is finish'd too, —
And the Athenian woman by his side;
That, when he wak'd, of force she must be ey'd.

Enter DEMETRIUS *and* HERMIA.

Obe. Stand close: this is the same Athenian.

Puck. This is the woman, but not this the man.

[3] A head.

[4] *Sort*, both here and eight lines above, means *company*. H.

[5] *Latch'd* or *letch'd*, licked or smeared over; *lecher*, Fr. Stevens says that, in the North, it signifies to *infect*.

Dem. O . why rebuke you him that loves you so?
Lay breath so bitter on your bitter foe.

Her. Now I but chide, but I should use thee worse,
For thou, I fear, hast given me cause to curse.
If thou hast slain Lysander in his sleep,
Being o'er shoes in blood, plunge in the deep,
And kill me too.
The sun was not so true unto the day,
As he to me: Would he have stol'n away
From sleeping Hermia? I'll believe as soon,
This whole earth may be bor'd; and that the moon
May through the centre creep, and so displease
Her brother's noon-tide with the Antipodes.
It cannot be but thou hast murder'd him;
So should a murderer look, so dead, so grim.

Dem. So should the murder'd look; and so should I,
Pierc'd through the heart with your stern cruelty:
Yet you, the murderer, look as bright, as clear,
As yonder Venus in her glimmering sphere.

Her. What's this to my Lysander? Where is he?
Ah! good Demetrius, wilt thou give him me?

Dem. I had rather give his carcass to my hounds.

Her. Out, dog! out, cur! thou driv'st me past the bounds
Of maiden's patience. Hast thou slain him then?
Henceforth be never number'd among men!
O! once tell true, tell true, even for my sake;
Durst thou have look'd upon him, being awake,
And hast thou kill'd him sleeping? O brave touch!
Could not a worm, an adder, do so much?
An adder did it; for with doubler tongue
Than thine, thou serpent, never adder stung.

[6] A *touch* anciently signified a *trick*. Ascham has—"The shrewd *touches* of many curst boys." And, in the old story of Howleglas,—"For at all times he did some mad *touch*

Dem. You spend your passion on a mispris'd mood: [7]
I am not guilty of Lysander's blood;
Nor is he dead, for aught that I can tell.

Her. I pray thee, tell me, then, that he is well.

Dem. And, if I could, what should I get therefore?

Her. A privilege, never to see me more. —
And from thy hated presence part I so: [8]
See me no more, whether he be dead or no. [*Exit.*

Dem. There is no following her in this fierce vein:
Here, therefore, for a while I will remain.
So sorrow's heaviness doth heavier grow
For debt that bankrupt sleep doth sorrow owe;
Which now in some slight measure it will pay,
If for his tender here I make some stay.
[*Lies down.*

Obe. What hast thou done? thou hast mistaken quite,
And laid the love-juice on some true-love's sight:
Of thy misprision must perforce ensue
Some true-love turn'd, and not a false turn'd true.

Puck. Then fate o'er-rules; that, one man holding troth,
A million fail, confounding oath on oath.

Obe. About the wood go swifter than the wind,
And Helena of Athens look thou find:
All fancy-sick she is, and pale of cheer [9]
With sighs of love, that cost the fresh blood dear: [10]

[7] That is, *in* a mistaken manner. *On* was sometimes used licentiously for *in*.

[8] *So* was here supplied by Pope, and has been universally received. H.

[9] *Cheer* is from the old French *chère*, which Cotgrave thus explains: "The face, visage, countenance, favour, looks, aspect." Hence it naturally came to mean that which *affects* the face, or gives it expression. H.

[10] So, in Henry VI., we have "blood-consuming," "blood

By some illusion see thou bring her here;
I'll charm his eyes, against she do appear.

Puck. I go, I go; look, how I go:
Swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow. [*Exit*

Obe. Flower of this purple dye,
Hit with Cupid's archery,
Sink in apple of his eye.
When his love he doth espy,
Let her shine as gloriously
As the Venus of the sky. —
When thou wak'st, if she be by,
Beg of her for remedy.

Re-enter PUCK.

Puck. Captain of our fairy band,
Helena is here at hand;
And the youth, mistook by me,
Pleading for a lover's fee:
Shall we their fond pageant see?
Lord, what fools these mortals be!

Obe. Stand aside: the noise they make
Will cause Demetrius to awake.

Puck. Then will two at once woo one;
That must needs be sport alone;[11]
And those things do best please me,
That befall preposterously.

Enter LYSANDER *and* HELENA.

Lys. Why should you think that I should woo in scorn?
Scorn and derision never come in tears:

drinking," and "blood-sucking sighs;" all alluding to the ancient supposition, that every sigh was indulged at the expense of a drop of blood.

[11] That is, so good that none other will seem sport in comparison. H.

Look, when I vow, I weep; and vows so born,
In their nativity all truth appears.
How can these things in me seem scorn to you,
Bearing the badge of faith to prove them true?

Hel. You do advance your cunning more and more.

When truth kills truth, O, devilish-holy fray!
These vows are Hermia's: Will you give her o'er?
Weigh oath with oath, and you will nothing weigh:
Your vows, to her and me, put in two scales,
Will even weigh; and both as light as tales.

Lys. I had no judgment when to her I swore.

Hel. Nor none, in my mind, now you give her o'er.

Lys. Demetrius loves her, and he loves not you.

Dem. [*Awaking.*] O Helen, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine!
To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne?
Crystal is muddy. O, how ripe in show
Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow!
That pure congealed white, high Taurus's snow,
Fann'd with the eastern wind, turns to a crow,
When thou hold'st up thy hand: O let me kiss
This princess of pure white, this seal[12] of bliss!

Hel. O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent
To set against me, for your merriment.
If you were civil, and knew courtesy,
You would not do me thus much injury.

[12] So, in Antony and Cleopatra, Act iii. sc. 2: "My playfellow, your hand; this kingly *seal*, and plighter of high hearts." *Princess* here plainly has the force of the superlative; the *paragon*, the *purest* of white. Mr. Dyce laughs at Collier for suggesting that *princess* may be a misprint for *impress*. This pretty piece of extravagance reminds us of Spenser's Una:

"A lovely ladie rode him faire beside,
Upon a lowly ass more white then snow;
Yet she much whiter."

Can you not hate me, as I know you do,
But you must join in souls [13] to mock me too?
If you were men, as men you are in show,
You would not use a gentle lady so;
To vow, and swear, and superpraise my parts,
When, I am sure, you hate me with your hearts.
You both are rivals, and love Hermia;
And now both rivals, to mock Helena:
A trim exploit, a manly enterprise,
To conjure tears up in a poor maid's eyes
With your derision! none of noble sort
Would so offend a virgin, and extort
A poor soul's patience, all to make you sport.

Lys. You are unkind, Demetrius; be not so;
For you love Hermia: this you know I know:
And here, with all good will, with all my heart,
In Hermia's love I yield you up my part;
And yours of Helena to me bequeath,
Whom I do love, and will do to my death.

Hel. Never did mockers waste more idle breath.

Dem. Lysander, keep thy Hermia; I will none:
If e'er I lov'd her, all that love is gone.
My heart to her but as guest-wise sojourn'd,
And now to Helen is it home return'd,
There to remain.

Lys. Helen, it is not so.

Dem. Disparage not the faith thou dost not know,
Lest to thy peril thou aby it dear.[14] —
Look, where thy love comes; yonder is thy dear.

[13] That is, join heartily, unite in the same mind.

[14] *Aby* or *abie* means to *suffer for*. Skinner thinks it is formed not from *abide*, but from *buy*; though the two are often confounded. Most editions print *abide* in this place: Fisher's quarto, however, has *aby*. Thus, also, in The Faery Queene, B. ii. Can. 8 "That direfull stroake thou dearely shalt *aby*." And in Beaumont and Fletcher's Knight of the Burning Pestle, Act iii. sc. 4: "Fool

Enter HERMIA.

Her. Dark night, that from the eye his function takes,
The ear more quick of apprehension makes;
Wherein it doth impair the seeing sense,
It pays the hearing double recompense: —
Thou art not by mine eye, Lysander, found;
Mine ear, I thank it, brought me to thy sound.
But why unkindly didst thou leave me so?

Lys. Why should he stay, whom love doth press to go?

Her What love could press Lysander from my side?

Lys. Lysander's love, that would not let him bide
Fair Helena, who more engilds the night
Than all yon fiery oes and eyes of light.
Why seek'st thou me? could not this make thee know,
The hate I bare thee made me leave thee so?

Her. You speak not as you think; it cannot be.

Hel. Lo, she is one of this confederacy!
Now I perceive they have conjoin'd, all three,
To fashion this false sport in spite of me.
Injurious Hermia! most ungrateful maid!
Have you conspir'd, have you with these contriv'd
To bait me with this foul derision?
Is all the counsel that we two have shar'd,
The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,
When we have chid the hasty-footed time
For parting us, — O! is all forgot?[15]

hardy knight, full soon thou shalt *aby* this fond reproach; thy body will I bang." H.

[15] The omission of a syllable after *O*, thus giving *O* the time of two syllables, adds greatly to the force and beauty of this line: all which the habit of metre-mongering has spoilt by inserting *and*. H

All school-days' friendship, childhood innocence [1]
We, Hermia, like two artificial [16] gods,
Have with our needles created both one flower,
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,
Both warbling of one song, both in one key;
As if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds,
Had been incorporate.[17] So we grew together,
Like to a double cherry, seeming parted,
But yet an union in partition;
Two lovely berries moulded on one stem:
So, with two seeming bodies, but one heart;
Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,
Due but to one, and crowned with one crest.[18]

[16] *Artificial* is here used for the worker in art, not the work; like its Latin original *artifex*, artist, or artificer. — *Needles*, in the next line, has been corrupted in modern editions into *neelds*; all for the sake of the measure! Those who cannot read poetry without counting the syllables on their fingers are very unwilling to let Shakespeare use *dactyls*. H.

[17] Gibbon, in his account of the holy friendship between the great Cappadocian saints, Basil and Gregory Nazianzen, Decline and Fall, Chap. xxvii. note 29, refers to this passage, and quotes a parallel passage from Gregory's Poem on his own Life. The historian adds, — Shakespeare had never read the poems of Gregory Nazianzen, he was ignorant of the Greek language; but his mother-tongue, the language of Nature, is the same in Cappadocia and in Britain." The following translation of St. Gregory's lines is given by Mr. Newman in his Church of the Fathers:

> "May I not boast how in our day we moved
> A truest pair, not without name in Greece;
> Had all things common, and one only soul
> In lodgment of a double outward frame?
> Our special bond, the thought of God above,
> And the high longing after holy things.
> And each of us was bold to trust in each,
> Unto the emptying of our deepest hearts;
> And then we loved the more, for sympathy
> Pleaded in each, and knit the twain in one." H.

[18] Mr. Douce thus explains this passage: "We had *two of the first*, i. e *bodies*, like the double coats in heraldry that belong to man and wife as *one person*, but which, like our *single heart*, have but *one crest*."

And will you rend our ancient love asunder,
To join with men in scorning your poor friend?
It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly:
Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for it;
Though I alone do feel the injury.

Her. I am amazed at your passionate words:
I scorn you not; it seems that you scorn me.

Hel. Have you not set Lysander, as in scorn,
To follow me, and praise my eyes and face?
And made your other love, Demetrius,
(Who even but now did spurn me with his foot,)
To call me goddess, nymph, divine, and rare,
Precious, celestial? Wherefore speaks he this
To her he hates? and wherefore doth Lysander
Deny your love, so rich within his soul,
And tender me, forsooth, affection,
But by your setting on, by your consent?
What though I be not so in grace as you,
So hung upon with love, so fortunate;
But miserable most, to love unlov'd;
This you should pity, rather than despise.

Her. I understand not what you mean by this

Hel. Ay, do, persever, counterfeit sad looks,
Make mouths upon me when I turn my back;
Wink at each other; hold the sweet jest up:
This sport, well carried, shall be chronicled.
If you have any pity, grace, or manners,
You would not make me such an argument.
But fare ye well: 'tis partly mine own fault,
Which death, or absence, soon shall remedy.

Lys. Stay, gentle Helena! hear my excuse:
My love, my life, my soul, fair Helena!

Hel. O excellent!

Her. Sweet, do not scorn her so

Dem. If she cannot entreat, I can compel.

Lys. Thou canst compel no more than she entreat:
Thy threats have no more strength, than her weak prayers. —
Helen, I love thee; by my life I do:
I swear by that which I will lose for thee,
To prove him false, that says I love thee not.
Dem. I say I love thee more than he can do.
Lys. If thou say so, withdraw, and prove it too.
Dem. Quick, come, —
Her. Lysander, whereto tends all this?
Lys. Away, you Ethiope!
Dem. No, no, he'll — Sir,[19]
Seem to break loose; take on, as you would follow;
But yet come not: You are a tame man, go!
Lys. Hang off, thou cat, thou burr! vile thing, let loose,
Or I will shake thee from me like a serpent.
Her. Why are you grown so rude? what change is this,
Sweet love?
Lys. Thy love? out, tawny Tartar, out!
Out, loathed medicine! O hated poison, hence!
Her. Do you not jest?
Hel. Yes, 'sooth; and so do you.
Lys. Demetrius, I will keep my word with thee.
Dem. I would I had your bond; for I perceive
A weak bond holds you: I'll not trust your word.
Lys. What! should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead?
Although I hate her, I'll not harm her so.

[19] This arrangement of the text is Malone's, who thus explains it. The words *he'll* are not in the folio, and *sir* is not in the quarto Demetrius, I suppose, would say, *No, no, he'll* not have the resolution to disengage himself from Hermia. But turning to Lysander, he addresses him ironically: "Sir, seem to break loose," &c

Her. What! can you do me greater harm than hate?
Hate me! wherefore? O me! what means my love?
Am not I Hermia? Are not you Lysander?
I am as fair now as I was erewhile.
Since night you lov'd me; yet since night you left me:
Why, then you left me,—O, the gods forbid!—
In earnest shall I say?
Lys. Ay, by my life;
And never did desire to see thee more.
Therefore, be out of hope, of question, doubt;
Be certain, nothing truer: 'tis no jest,
That I do hate thee, and love Helena.
Her. O me—you juggler! you canker-blossom![20]
You thief of love! what, have you come by night,
And stol'n my love's heart from him?
Hel. Fine, i'faith!
Have you no modesty, no maiden shame,
No touch of bashfulness? What! will you tear
Impatient answers from my gentle tongue?
Fie, fie! you counterfeit, you puppet you!
Her. Puppet! why so? Ay, that way goes the game.
Now I perceive that she hath made compare
Between our statures: she hath urg'd her height,
And with her personage, her tall personage,
Her height, forsooth, she hath prevail'd with him.—
And are you grown so high in his esteem,
Because I am so dwarfish, and so low?
How low am I, thou painted maypole? speak;

[20] The canker is a worm that preys on the leaves or buds of flowers, always beginning in the middle. So before, in this play "Some to kill *cankers* in the musk-rose buds."

How low am I? I am not yet so low,
But that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.

Hel. I pray you, though you mock me, gentlemen,
Let her not hurt me: I was never curst;[21]
I have no gift at all in shrewishness;
I am a right maid for my cowardice:
Let her not strike me: You, perhaps, may think,
Because she is something lower than myself,
That I can match her.

Her. Lower! hark, again.

Hel. Good Hermia, do not be so bitter with me.
I evermore did love you, Hermia,
Did ever keep your counsels, never wrong'd you;
Save that, in love unto Demetrius,
I told him of your stealth unto this wood:
He follow'd you; for love I follow'd him:
But he hath chid me hence; and threaten'd me
To strike me, spurn me, nay, to kill me too:
And now, so you will let me quiet go,
To Athens will I bear my folly back,
And follow you no further: Let me go:
You see how simple and how fond I am.

Her. Why, get you gone: Who is't that hinders you?

Hel. A foolish heart that I leave here behind.

Her. What! with Lysander?

Hel. With Demetrius.

Lys. Be not afraid: she shall not harm thee, Helena.

Dem. No, sir; she shall not, though you take her part.

Hel. O! when she's angry, she is keen and shrewd:

[21] That is, froward, cross, ill-conditioned, or ill-spoken.

She was a vixen, when she went to school;
And, though she be but little, she is fierce.

Her. Little again! nothing but low and little!—
Why will you suffer her to flout me thus?
Let me come to her.

Lys. Get you gone, you dwarf!
You minimus, of hindering knot-grass made;[22]
You bead, you acorn!

Dem. You are too officious
In her behalf that scorns your services:
Let her alone; speak not of Helena;
Take not her part: for if thou dost intend
Never so little show of love to her,
Thou shalt aby it.[23]

Lys. Now she holds me not;
Now follow, if thou dar'st, to try whose right,
Of thine or mine, is most in Helena.

Dem. Follow? nay, I'll go with thee cheek by jowl. [*Exeunt* LYS. *and* DEM.

Her. You, mistress, all this coil is 'long of you:[24]
Nay, go not back.

Hel. I will not trust you, I;
Nor longer stay in your curst[25] company.
Your hands, than mine, are quicker for a fray,
My legs are longer though, to run away. [*Exit.*

Her. I am amaz'd, and know not what to say.
[*Exit, pursuing* HELENA.

[22] *Knot-grass*, it seems, was anciently supposed to stop the growth of those to whom it was applied. Thus, in Beaumont and Fletcher's Knight of the Burning Pestle, Act ii. sc. 2: "The child's a fatherless child, and say they should put him into a strait pair of gaskins, 'twere worse than *knot-grass;* he would *never grow* after it." "O, who can tell the hidden power of *herbs*, and might of magic spell!" Knot-grass is a low, creeping *herb.* H

[23] That is, pay dearly for it, rue it. See note 14.

[24] Is owing to you, is caused by you.

[25] *Curst* is *shrewish, sviteful,* not *cursed,* as readers are apt to suppose.

Obe. This is thy negligence: still thou mistak'st,
Or else committ'st thy knaveries wilfully.

Puck. Believe me, king of shadows, I mistook.
Did not you tell me I should know the man
By the Athenian garments he had on?
And so far blameless proves my enterprise,
That I have 'nointed an Athenian's eyes:
And so far am I glad it so did sort,
As this their jangling I esteem a sport.

Obe. Thou seest, these lovers seek a place to fight:
Hie, therefore, Robin, overcast the night;
The starry welkin cover thou anon
With drooping fog, as black as Acheron;
And lead these testy rivals so astray,
As one come not within another's way.
Like to Lysander sometime frame thy tongue,
Then stir Demetrius up with bitter wrong;
And sometime rail thou like Demetrius:
And from each other look thou lead them thus,
Till o'er their brows death-counterfeiting sleep
With leaden legs and batty wings doth creep:
Then crush this herb into Lysander's eye;
Whose liquor hath this virtuous property,
To take from thence all error with his might,
And make his eye-balls roll with wonted sight.
When they next wake, all this derision
Shall seem a dream, and fruitless vision;
And back to Athens shall the lovers wend,
With league whose date till death shall never end.
Whiles I in this affair do thee employ,
I'll to my queen, and beg her Indian boy;
And then I will her charmed eye release
From monster's view, and all things shall be peace

Puck. My fairy lord, this must be done with haste;
For night's swift dragons[26] cut the clouds full fast,
And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger;
At whose approach, ghosts, wandering here and there,
Troop home to church-yards: damned spirits all,
That in cross-ways and floods have burial,[27]
Already to their wormy beds are gone;
For fear lest day should look their shames upon,
They wilfully themselves exile from light,
And must for aye consort with black-brow'd night.

Obe. But we are spirits of another sort:
I with the Morning's love[28] have oft made sport;
And, like a forester, the groves may tread,
Even till the eastern gate, all fiery red,[29]
Opening on Neptune with fair blessed beams,
Turns into yellow gold his salt-green streams.

[26] The chariot of Madam Night was anciently drawn by a team of dragons, that is, serpents, who were thought to be always awake, because they slept with their eyes open; and therefore were selected for this purpose. So, in Cymbeline, Act ii. sc. 2: "Swift, swift, ye *dragons* of the night." And in Milton's Il Penseroso:

"Smoothing the rugged brow of night,
While Cynthia checks her *dragon* yoke." H.

[27] The ghosts of self-murderers, who are buried in cross-roads; and of those who being drowned were condemned (according to the opinion of the ancients) to wander for a hundred years, as the rites of sepulture had never been regularly bestowed on their bodies. See the fine passage in Hamlet, Act i. sc. 1: "I have heard, the cock, that is the trumpet of the morn," &c.

[28] Cephalus, the mighty hunter, and paramour of Aurora, was here probably meant.

[29] This, it is thought, may have been suggested by the following from Chaucer's Knight's Tale:

"The besy larke, the messager of day,
Salewith in hire song the morwe gray;
And firy Phebus riseth up so bright
That all the orient laugheth of the sight,
And with his stremes drieth in the greves
The silver dropes, hanging on the leves." B.

But, notwithstanding, haste; make no delay:
We may effect this business yet ere day.
[*Exit* OBERON.

Puck. Up and down, up and down,
I will lead them up and down:
I am fear'd in field and town;
Goblin, lead them up and down.
Here comes one.

Enter LYSANDER.

Lys. Where art thou, proud Demetrius? speak thou now.

Puck. Here, villain! drawn and ready. Where art thou?

Lys. I will be with thee straight.

Puck. Follow me then
To plainer ground. [*Exit* LYS. *as following the voice*

Enter DEMETRIUS.

Dem. Lysander! speak again.
Thou runaway, thou coward, art thou fled?
Speak! In some bush? Where dost thou hide thy head?

Puck. Thou coward! art thou bragging to the stars,
Telling the bushes that thou look'st for wars,
And wilt not come? Come, recreant; come, thou child,
I'll whip thee with a rod: He is defil'd,
That draws a sword on thee.

Dem. Yea; art thou there?

Puck. Follow my voice: we'll try no manhood here. [*Exeunt*

Re-enter LYSANDER.

Lys. He goes before me, and still dares me on:
When I come where he calls, then he is gone.
The villain is much lighter heel'd than I:
I follow'd fast, but faster he did fly;
That fallen am I in dark uneven way,
And here will rest me. Come, thou gentle day!
[*Lies down*
For if but once thou show me thy grey light,
I'll find Demetrius, and revenge this spite. [*Sleeps*

Re-enter PUCK *and* DEMETRIUS.

Puck. Ho, ho, ho! Coward, why com'st thou not?

Dem. Abide me, if thou dar'st; for well I wot,
Thou runn'st before me, shifting every place;
And dar'st not stand, nor look me in the face.
Where art thou now?

Puck. Come hither; I am here.

Dem. Nay, then thou mock'st me. Thou shalt 'by this dear,[30]
If ever I thy face by day-light see:
Now, go thy way. Faintness constraineth me
To measure out my length on this cold bed.—
By day's approach look to be visited.
[*Lies down and sleeps.*

Enter HELENA.

Hel. O weary night! O long and tedious night!
Abate thy hours: shine, comforts, from the east;
That I may back to Athens by day-light,
From these that my poor company detest:—

[30] *Aby.* See notes 14 and 23.

And, sleep, that sometime shuts up sorrow's eye,
Steal me awhile from mine own company. [*Sleeps*

Puck. Yet but three? Come one more;
Two of both kinds makes up four.
Here she comes, curst and sad: —
Cupid is a knavish lad,
Thus to make poor females mad.

Enter HERMIA.

Her. Never so weary, never so in woe,
Bedabbled with the dew, and torn with briers,
I can no further crawl, no further go;
My legs can keep no pace with my desires.
Here will I rest me till the break of day:
Heaven shield Lysander, if they mean a fray!
[*Lies down.*

Puck. On the ground sleep sound:
I'll apply to your eye,
Gentle lover, remedy.
[*Squeezing the juice on* LYSANDER'S *eye*
When thou wak'st, thou tak'st
True delight in the sight
Of thy former lady's eye:
And the country proverb known,
That every man should take his own,
In your waking shall be shown:
Jack shall have Jill;
Nought shall go ill;
The man shall have his mare again,
And all shall be well.[31]
[*Exit* PUCK. — DEM., HEL., *&c., sleep.*

[31] These last four lines are to be found in Heywood's Epigrams, or Three Hundred Proverbs.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. The same.

Enter TITANIA *and* BOTTOM, *Fairies attending;* OBERON *behind unseen.*

Tita. Come, sit thee down upon this flowery bed,
While I thy amiable cheeks do coy,[1]
And stick musk-roses in thy sleek smooth head,
And kiss thy fair large ears, my gentle joy.

Bot. Where's Peas-blossom?

Peas. Ready.

Bot. Scratch my head, Peas-blossom. — Where's monsieur Cobweb?

Cob. Ready.

Bot. Monsieur Cobweb, good monsieur, get your weapons in your hand, and kill me a red-hipp'd humble-bee on the top of a thistle; and, good monsieur, bring me the honey-bag. Do not fret yourself too much in the action, monsieur; and, good monsieur, have a care the honey-bag break not: I would be loth to have you overflown with a honey-bag, signior. — Where's monsieur Mustard-seed?

Must. Ready.

Bot. Give me your neif,[2] monsieur Mustard-seed. Pray you, leave your courtesy, good monsieur.

Must. What's your will?

Bot. Nothing, good monsieur, but to help cavalery Cobweb[3] to scratch. I must to the barber's, mon-

[1] To *coy*, is to stroke or soothe with the hand.

[2] That is, *fist*. So, in 2 Henry IV., Pistol says: "Sweet knight, I kiss thy *neif*." In Ben Jonson's Poetaster, Act iii. sc. 1. the word is spelt *neuf* H.

[3] Grey says, —"Without doubt it should be cavalery Peas

sieur; for, methinks, I am marvellous hairy about the face; and I am such a tender ass, if my hair do but tickle me, I must scratch.

Tita. What, wilt thou hear some music, my sweet love?

Bot. I have a reasonable good ear in music: let us have the tongs and the bones.

Tita. Or say, sweet love, what thou desir'st to eat.

Bot. Truly, a peck of provender: I could munch your good dry oats. Methinks, I have a great desire to a bottle of hay:[4] good hay, sweet hay, hath no fellow.

Tita. I have a venturous fairy that shall seek
The squirrel's hoard, and fetch thee new nuts.

Bot. I had rather have a handful or two of dried peas. But, I pray you, let none of your people stir me; I have an exposition of sleep come upon me.

Tita. Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms
Fairies, be gone, and be awhile away.
So doth the woodbine the sweet honeysuckle
Gently entwist; the female ivy so
Enrings the barky fingers of the elm.[5]
O, how I love thee! how I dote on thee!

[*They sleep*

blossom: as for cavalery Cobweb, he has just been despatched upon a perilous adventure." Of course Mr. Grey is right. H.

[4] *Bottle* is an old word for *bundle*, from the French *botcau*. Richardson says,—"It is still common in the northern parts of England to call a truss or bundle of hay *a bottle*." H.

[5] This is usually printed as if *sweet honeysuckle* were in apposition with *woodbine*, making *the barky fingers* the object of both *entwist* and *enrings*. But Steevens, who introduced this reading, has given no authority for thus making *woodbine* and *honeysuckle* mean the same thing. The true reading is aptly shown by a passage in Jonson's Vision of Delight:

"It looks, methinks, like one of Nature's eyes,
Or her whole body set in art: behold!

OBERON *advances.* *Enter* PUCK.

Obe. Welcome, good Robin. Seest thou this sweet sight?
Her dotage now I do begin to pity.
For meeting her of late behind the wood,
Seeking sweet favours for this hateful fool,
I did upbraid her, and fall out with her:
For she his hairy temples then had rounded
With coronet of fresh and fragrant flowers;
And that same dew, which sometime on the buds
Was wont to swell like round and orient pearls,
Stood now within the pretty flowerets' eyes,
Like tears that did their own disgrace bewail.
When I had at my pleasure taunted her,
And she in mild terms begg'd my patience,
I then did ask of her her changeling child;
Which straight she gave me, and her fairy sent
To bear him to my bower in Fairy-land.
And now I have the boy, I will undo
This hateful imperfection of her eyes.
And, gentle Puck, take this transformed scalp
From off the head of this Athenian swain;
That he awaking when the other do,
May all to Athens back again repair;
And think no more of this night's accidents,
But as the fierce vexation of a dream.
But first I will release the fairy queen.

> How the blue *bindweed* doth itself infold
> With *honey-suckle*, and both these intwine
> Themselves with bryony and jessamine,
> To cast a kind and odoriferous shade."

Mr. Gifford, in a note upon this passage, remarks,—"The *wood bine* of Shakespeare is the blue *bindweed* of Jonson. In many of our counties, the *woodbine* is still the name of the great *con volvulus*."

Be, as thou wast wont to be;
See, as thou wast wont to see:
Dian's bud o'er Cupid's flower [6]
Hath such force and blessed power.

Now, my Titania! wake you, my sweet queen.

Tita. My Oberon! what visions have I seen.
Methought I was enamour'd of an ass.

Obe. There lies your love.

Tita. How came these things to pass!
O, how mine eyes do loathe his visage now!

Obe. Silence, awhile. — Robin, take off this head. —
Titania, music call; and strike more dead
Than common sleep of all these five the sense.

Tita. Music, ho! music: such as charmeth sleep.

Puck. Now, when thou wak'st, with thine own fool's eyes peep.

Obe. Sound, music. [*Still music*] Come, my queen, take hands with me,
And rock the ground whereon these sleepers be
Now thou and I are new in amity;
And will, to-morrow midnight, solemnly
Dance in Duke Theseus' house triumphantly,
And bless it to all fair posterity:
There shall the pairs of faithful lovers be
Wedded, with Theseus, all in jollity.

Puck. Fairy king, attend and mark;
I do hear the morning lark.

Obe. Then, my queen, in silence sad,[7]
Trip we after the night's shade:

[6] *Dian's bud* is the bud of the *Agnus Castus*, or *Chaste Tree*. "The vertue of this hearbe is, that he will kepe man and woman *chaste*." Macer's Herbal, by Lynacre. Cupid's flower is the *Viola tricolor*, or *Love in Idleness*. See Act ii. sc. 1, note 24.

[7] *Sad* here signifies only *grave*, serious.

We the globe can compass soon,
Swifter than the wandering moon.
Tita. Come, my lord; and in our flight,
Tell me how it came this night,
That I sleeping here was found,
With these mortals on the ground. [*Exeunt.*
[*Horns sound within.*

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, EGEUS, *and Train.*

The. Go, one of you, find out the forester;—
For now our observation is perform'd:[8]
And since we have the vaward[9] of the day,
My love shall hear the music of my hounds.—
Uncouple in the western valley; let them go:
Despatch, I say, and find the forester.—
We will, fair queen, up to the mountain's top,
And mark the musical confusion
Of hounds and echo in conjunction.
Hip. I was with Hercules, and Cadmus, once,
When in a wood of Crete they bay'd the bear
With hounds of Sparta: never did I hear
Such gallant chiding;[10] for, besides the groves,
The skies, the fountains, every region near
Seem'd all one mutual cry: I never heard
So musical a discord, such sweet thunder.
The. My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind,
So flew'd, so sanded;[11] and their heads are hung

[8] That is, the honours due to the morning of *May*. So, in a former scene—"to do *observance* to a morn of May."

[9] The early part, the *vanward*, of the day.

[10] *Chiding* means here the *cry of hounds*. To *chide* is used sometimes for to sound, or make a noise without any reference to scolding. So, in Henry VIII.: "As doth a rock against the *chiding* flood."

[11] The *flews* are the large chaps of a deep-mouthed hound.—*Sanded* means of a sandy colour, which is one of the true denotements of a blood-hound.

With ears that sweep away the morning dew;
Crook-kneed, and dew-lapp'd like Thessalian bulls;
Slow in pursuit, but match'd in mouth like bells,
Each under each. A cry more tuneable
Was never halloo'd to, nor cheer'd with horn,
In Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly:
Judge, when you hear. — But, soft! what nymphs are these?

Ege. My lord, this is my daughter here asleep:
And this, Lysander; this Demetrius is;
This Helena, old Nedar's Helena:
I wonder of their being here together.

The. No doubt, they rose up early, to observe
The rite of May; and, hearing our intent,
Came here in grace of our solemnity. —
But speak, Egeus; is not this the day
That Hermia should give answer of her choice?

Ege. It is, my lord.

The. Go, bid the huntsmen wake them with their horns.

Horns, and shout within. DEMETRIUS, LYSANDER, HERMIA, *and* HELENA, *wake and start up.*

The. Good-morrow, friends. Saint Valentine is past:
Begin these wood-birds but to couple now?

Lys. Pardon, my lord. [*He and the rest kneel.*

The. I pray you all, stand up.
I know you are two rival enemies:
How comes this gentle concord in the world,
That hatred is so far from jealousy,
To sleep by hate, and fear no enmity?

Lys. My lord, I shall reply amazedly,
Half 'sleep, half waking: But as yet, I swear,
I cannot truly say how I came here;

But, as I think, (for truly would I speak, —
And now I do bethink me, so it is,)
I came with Hermia hither: our intent
Was to be gone from Athens, where we might
Without the peril of the Athenian law —

Ege. Enough, enough! my lord, you have enough:
I beg the law, the law, upon his head. —
They would have stol'n away; they would, Demetrius,
Thereby to have defeated you and me;
You, of your wife, and me, of my consent;
Of my consent that she should be your wife.

Dem. My lord, fair Helen told me of their stealth,
Of this their purpose hither, to this wood;
And I in fury hither follow'd them;
Fair Helena in fancy following me.[12]
But, my good lord, I wot not by what power,
(But by some power it is,) my love to Hermia,
Melted as the snow, seems to me now
As the remembrance of an idle gawd,
Which in my childhood I did dote upon:
And all the faith, the virtue of my heart,
The object, and the pleasure of mine eye,
Is only Helena. To her, my lord,
Was I betroth'd ere I saw Hermia:
But, like in sickness, did I loathe this food;
But, as in health, come to my natural taste,
Now do I wish it, love it, long for it,
And will for evermore be true to it.

The. Fair lovers, you are fortunately met:
Of this discourse we more will hear anon. —
Egeus, I will overbear your will;

[12] *Fancy* is here *love* or *affection*, and is opposed to *fury*. So, in Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis: "A martial man to be soft *fancy's* slave." Some now call that which a man takes particular delight in his *fancy*.

For in the temple, by and by with us,
These couples shall eternally be knit.
And, for the morning now is something worn,
Our purpos'd hunting shall be set aside. —
Away, with us, to Athens: Three and three,
We'll hold a feast in great solemnity. —
Come, Hippolyta.

[*Exeunt* THE., HIP., EGE., *and Train.*

Dem. These things seem small and undistinguishable,
Like far-off mountains turned into clouds.

Her. Methinks, I see these things with parted eye,
When every thing seems double.

Hel. So methinks:
And I have found Demetrius like a jewel,
Mine own, and not mine own.[13]

Dem. Are you sure
That we are awake? It seems to me,
That yet we sleep, we dream. — Do not you think
The duke was here, and bid us follow him?

Her. Yea; and my father.

Hel. And Hippolyta.

Lys. And he did bid us follow to the temple.

Dem. Why, then we are awake: let's follow him;
And by the way let us recount our dreams.

[*Exeunt.*

Bot. [*Awaking.*] When my cue comes, call me, and I will answer: — my next is, "Most fair Pyramus." — Hey, ho! — Peter Quince! Flute, the bellows-mender! Snout, the tinker! Starveling! God's my life! stolen hence, and left me asleep! I have had a most rare vision. I have had a dream, — past the wit of man to say what dream it was: Man

[13] That is, as the jewel which one finds is his own and not his own; his own unless the loser claim it. H.

is but an ass, if he go about to expound this dream. Methought I was — there is no man can tell what. Methought I was, and methought I had, — But man is but a patch'd fool, if he will offer to say what methought I had. The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not seen, man's hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceive, nor his heart to report, what my dream was. I will get Peter Quince to write a ballad of this dream: it shall be called Bottom's Dream, because it hath no bottom; and I will sing it in the latter end of a play, before the duke: Peradventure, to make it the more gracious, I shall sing it at her death.[14] [*Exit.*

SCENE II. Athens. A Room in QUINCE's House.

Enter QUINCE, FLUTE, SNOUT, *and* STARVELING.

Quin. Have you sent to Bottom's house? is he come home yet?

Star. He cannot be heard of. Out of doubt, he is transported.

Flu. If he come not, then the play is marr'd: It goes not forward, doth it?

Quin. It is not possible: you have not a man in all Athens able to discharge Pyramus, but he.

Flu. No; he hath simply the best wit of any handicraft man in Athens.

Quin. Yea; and the best person too; and he is a very paramour for a sweet voice.

Flu. You must say, paragon: a paramour is, God bless us! a thing of nought.

[14] That is, at Thisbe's death, Bottom's head being full of the part he is going to play. Theobald could not imagine what *her* meant, and therefore proposed *after death*.

Enter SNUG.

Snug. Masters, the duke is coming from the temple, and there is two or three lords and ladies more married: if our sport had gone forward, we had all been made men.

Flu. O, sweet bully Bottom! Thus hath he lost sixpence a-day during his life; he could not have 'scaped sixpence a-day: an the duke had not given him sixpence a-day for playing Pyramus, I'll be hang'd; he would have deserved it: sixpence a-day, in Pyramus, or nothing.

Enter BOTTOM.

Bot. Where are these lads? where are these hearts?

Quin. Bottom! — O, most courageous day! O, most happy hour!

Bot. Masters, I am to discourse wonders: but ask me not what; for, if I tell you, I am no true Athenian. I will tell you every thing, right as it fell out.

Quin. Let us hear, sweet Bottom.

Bot. Not a word of me. All that I will tell you is, that the duke hath dined: Get your apparel together; good strings to your beards, new ribbons to your pumps: meet presently at the palace; every man look o'er his part; for, the short and the long is, our play is preferred. In any case let Thisby have clean linen; and let not him that plays the lion pare his nails, for they shall hang out for the lion's claws. And, most dear actors, eat no onions, nor garlic, for we are to utter sweet breath; and I do not doubt but to hear them say, it is a sweet comedy No more words: away! go, away!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. The same.

An Apartment in the Palace of THESEUS.

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, PHILOSTRATE, *Lords, and Attendants.*

Hip. 'Tis strange, my Theseus, that these lovers speak of.

The. More strange than true: I never may believe
These antique fables, nor these fairy toys.
Lovers, and madmen, have such seething brains [1]
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend
More than cool reason ever comprehends.
The lunatic, the lover, and the poet,
Are of imagination all compact: [2]
One sees more devils than vast hell can hold;
That is the madman: the lover, all as frantic,
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt:
The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And, as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing

[1] So, in The Tempest: "Thy *brains*, now useless, *boil'd* within thy skull." And in The Winter's Tale: "Would any but these *boil'd brains* of three and twenty hunt this weather?" Drayton, in his Epistle to Reynolds on poets and poetry, seems to have had this in his mind, when, speaking of Marlowe, he says:

"That *fine madness* still he did retain,
Which rightly should possess a *poet's* brain."

[2] That is, are made, *composed*, of mere imagination.

A local habitation, and a name.
Such tricks hath strong imagination,
That, if it would but apprehend some joy,
It comprehends some bringer of that joy;
Or, in the night, imagining some fear,
How easy is a bush suppos'd a bear!

Hip. But all the story of the night told over
And all their minds transfigur'd so together,
More witnesseth than fancy's images,
And grows to something of great constancy;[3]
But, howsoever, strange and admirable.

Enter LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, HERMIA, *and* HELENA.

The. Here come the lovers, full of joy and mirth.—
Joy, gentle friends! joy, and fresh days of love,
Accompany your hearts!

Lys. More than to us
Wait on your royal walks, your board, your bed!

The. Come now; what masks, what dances shall we have,
To wear away this long age of three hours,
Between our after-supper, and bed-time?
Where is our usual manager of mirth?
What revels are in hand? Is there no play,
To ease the anguish of a torturing hour?
Call Philostrate.

Philost. Here, mighty Theseus.

The. Say, what abridgment[4] have you for this evening?
What mask? what music? How shall we beguile
The lazy time, if not with some delight?

[3] That is, consistency, stability, certainty.

[4] *Abridgment* appears to mean some *pastime* to *shorten* the tedious evening.

Philost. There is a brief,[5] how many sports are ripe:
Make choice of which your highness will see first.
[*Giving a paper.*

The. [*Reads.*] "The battle with the Centaurs, to be sung
By an Athenian eunuch to the harp."
We'll none of that: that have I told my love,
In glory of my kinsman Hercules.
"The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals,
Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage."
That is an old device; and it was play'd
When I from Thebes came last a conqueror.
"The thrice three Muses mourning for the death
Of learning, late deceas'd in beggary."
That is some satire, keen, and critical,
Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony.
"A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus,
And his love Thisbe; very tragical mirth."
Merry and tragical! Tedious and brief!
That is, hot ice, and wondrous strange snow.
How shall we find the concord of this discord?

Philost. A play there is, my lord, some ten words long;
Which is as brief as I have known a play;
But by ten words, my lord, it is too long;
Which makes it tedious: for in all the play
There is not one word apt, one player fitted.
And tragical, my noble lord, it is;
For Pyramus therein doth kill himself.
Which, when I saw rehears'd, I must confess,
Made mine eyes water; but more merry tears
The passion of loud laughter never shed.

The. What are they that do play it?

[5] Short account.

Philost. Hard-handed men, that work in Athens here,
Which never labour'd in their minds till now;
And now have toil'd their unbreath'd[6] memories
With this same play, against your nuptial.

The. And we will hear it.

Philost. No, my noble lord,
It is not for you: I have heard it over,
And it is nothing, nothing in the world,
(Unless you can find sport in their intents,)
Extremely stretch'd, and conn'd with cruel pain,
To do you service.

The. I will hear that play;
For never any thing can be amiss,
When simpleness and duty tender it.
Go, bring them in; — and take your places, ladies.
[*Exit* PHILOSTRATE.

Hip. I love not to see wretchedness o'ercharg'd,
And duty in his service perishing.

The. Why, gentle sweet, you shall see no such thing.

Hip. He says they can do nothing in this kind.

The. The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing.
Our sport shall be, to take what they mistake:
And what poor duty cannot do,
Noble respect takes it in might, not merit.[7]
Where I have come, great clerks have purposed
To greet me with premeditated welcomes;
Where I have seen them shiver and look pale,
Make periods in the midst of sentences,
Throttle their practis'd accent in their fears,

6 That is, unexercised, unpractised.

7 That is, according to the ability of the doer, not according to the worth of the thing done. H.

And, in conclusion, dumbly have broke off,
Not paying me a welcome: Trust me, sweet,
Out of this silence, yet, I pick'd a welcome;
And in the modesty of fearful duty
I read as much, as from the rattling tongue
Of saucy and audacious eloquence.
Love, therefore, and tongue-tied simplicity,
In least speak most, to my capacity.

Enter PHILOSTRATE.

Philost. So please your grace, the prologue is addrest.[8]

The. Let him approach. [*Flourish of trumpets.*[9]

Enter Prologue.

Prol. "If we offend, it is with our good will.
That you should think, we come not to offend,
But with good will. To show our simple skill,
That is the true beginning of our end.
Consider then, we come but in despite.
We do not come as minding to content you,
Our true intent is. All for your delight,
We are not here. That you should here repent you,
The actors are at hand; and, by their show,
You shall know all, that you are like to know."[10]

[8] Ready.

[9] Anciently the prologue entered after the third sounding of the trumpets, or, as we should now say, after the third music.

[10] Had "this fellow" stood "upon points," his speech would have read nearly as follows:

"If we offend, it is with our good will
That you should think we come not to offend;
But with good will to show our simple skill:
That is the true beginning. Of our end
Consider then: we come; but in despite
We do not come: as minding to content you,
Our true intent is all for your delight.
We are not here, that you should here repent you
The actors are at hand; and, by their show,
You shall know all that you are like to know." H

The This fellow doth not stand upon points.

Lys. He hath rid his prologue, like a rough colt; he knows not the stop. A good moral, my lord: It is not enough to speak, but to speak true.

Hip. Indeed he hath play'd on his prologue like a child on a recorder;[11] a sound, but not in government.

The. His speech was like a tangled chain; nothing impaired, but all disordered. Who is next?

Enter PYRAMUS *and* THISBE, *Wall, Moonshine, and Lion, as in dumb show.*

Prol. "Gentles, perchance, you wonder at this show;
But wonder on, till truth make all things plain.
This man is Pyramus, if you would know;
This beauteous lady Thisby is, certain.
This man, with lime and rough-cast, doth present
Wall, that vile wall which did these lovers sunder;
And through wall's chink, poor souls, they are content
To whisper; at the which let no man wonder.
This man, with lantern, dog, and bush of thorn,
Presenteth moonshine; for, if you will know,
By moonshine did these lovers think no scorn
To meet at Ninus' tomb, there, there to woo.
This grisly beast, which lion hight[12] by name,
The trusty Thisby, coming first by night,
Did scare away, or rather did affright:
And, as she fled, her mantle she did fall,
Which lion vile with bloody mouth did stain.
Anon comes Pyramus, sweet youth, and tall,
And finds his trusty Thisby's mantle slain:
Whereat with blade, with bloody blameful blade,
He bravely broach'd his boiling bloody breast;
And, Thisby tarrying in mulberry shade,
His dagger drew, and died. For all the rest,

[11] A kind of flageolet. See The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act v. sc. 4, note 1.

[12] Is called.

Let lion, moonshine, wall, and lovers twain,
At large discourse, while here they do remain."
[*Exeunt Prol.*, THISBE, *Lion, and Moonshine.*

The. I wonder, if the lion be to speak.

Dem. No wonder, my lord: one lion may, when many asses do.

Wall. "In this same interlude, it doth befall,
That I, one Snout by name, present a wall;
And such a wall, as I would have you think,
That had in it a cranny'd hole, or chink,
Through which the lovers, Pyramus and Thisby,
Did whisper often very secretly.
This lime, this rough-cast, and this stone, doth show
That I am that same wall; the truth is so:
And this the cranny is, right and sinister,
Through which the fearful lovers are to whisper.

The. Would you desire lime and hair to speak better?

Dem. It is the wittiest partition[13] that ever I heard discourse, my lord.

The. Pyramus draws near the wall: silence!

Enter PYRAMUS.

Pyr. "O grim-look'd night! O night with hue so black!
O night, which ever art, when day is not!
O night! O night! alack, alack, alack!
I fear my Thisby's promise is forgot.—

[13] Some commentator has expressed the odd fancy, that *partition* here refers to the many-headed sermons which the Puritans were so zealous to reform into the place of the Scriptures and the Book of Common Prayer; and which Jeremy Taylor had in his eye, something more than fifty years later, when he got himself imprisoned for writing,—"The people have fallen under the saws and harrows of impertinent and ignorant preachers, who think all religion is a sermon, and pray, that they may be thought able to talk, but not to hold their peace." H

And thou, O wall! O sweet, O lovely wall.
That stand'st between her father's ground and mine,
Thou wall, O wall! O sweet, and lovely wall!
Show me thy chink, to blink through with mine eyne.
[*Wall holds up his fingers.*
Thanks, courteous wall: Jove shield thee well for this!
But what see I? No Thisby do I see.
O wicked wall! through whom I see no bliss;
Curs'd be thy stones for thus deceiving me!"

The. The wall, methinks, being sensible, should curse again.

Pyr. No, in truth, sir, he should not. "Deceiving me," is Thisby's cue: she is to enter now, and I am to spy her through the wall. You shall see, it will fall pat as I told you: — Yonder she comes.

Enter THISBE.

This. "O wall! full often hast thou heard my moans
For parting my fair Pyramus and me:
My cherry lips have often kiss'd thy stones;
Thy stones with lime and hair knit up in thee."

Pyr. "I see a voice: now will I to the chink,
To spy an I can hear my Thisby's face.
Thisby!"

This. "My love! thou art my love, I think."

Pyr. "Think what thou wilt, I am thy lover's grace,
And like Limander[14] am I trusty still."

This. "And I like Helen, till the fates me kill."

Pyr. "Not Shafalus to Procrus was so true."

This. "As Shafalus to Procrus, I to you."

Pyr. "O! kiss me through the hole of this vile wall."

This. "I kiss the wall's hole, not your lips at all."

Pyr. "Wilt thou at Ninny's tomb meet me straightway?"

This. "'Tide life, 'tide death, I come without delay."

[14] *Limander* and *Helen*, blunderingly for Leander and Hero, as *Shafalus* and *Procrus* for Cephalus and Procris.

Wall. "Thus have I, wall, my part discharged so;
And, being done, thus wall away doth go."

[*Exeunt Wall*, PYRAMUS, *and* THISBE.

The. Now is the mural down between the two neighbours.

Dem. No remedy, my lord, when walls are so wilful to hear without warning.[15]

Hip. This is the silliest stuff that e'er I heard.

The. The best in this kind are but shadows; and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them

Hip. It must be your imagination then, and not theirs.

The. If we imagine no worse of them, than they of themselves, they may pass for excellent men. Here come two noble beasts in, a man and a lion.

Enter Lion and Moonshine.

Lion. "You, ladies, you, whose gentle hearts do fear
The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on floor,
May now, perchance, both quake and tremble here,
When lion rough in wildest rage doth roar.
Then know, that I, one Snug the joiner, am
No lion fell, nor else no lion's dam:
For if I should as lion come in strife
Into this place, 'twere pity on my life."

The. A very gentle beast, and of a good conscience.

Dem. The very best at a beast, my lord, that e'er I saw.

Lys. This lion is a very fox for his valour.

The. True; and a goose for his discretion.

Dem. Not so, my lord: for his valour can-

[15] This alludes to the proverb, "Walls have ears." A *wall* between almost any *two neighbours* would soon be down, were it to exercise this faculty without previous *warning*.

not carry his discretion; and the fox carries the goose.

The. His discretion, I am sure, cannot carry his valour; for the goose carries not the fox. It is well: leave it to his discretion, and let us listen to the moon.

Moon. "This lantern doth the horned moon present:"

Dem. He should have worn the horns on his head.

The. He is no crescent, and his horns are invisible within the circumference.

Moon. "This lantern doth the horned moon present: Myself the man i'the moon do seem to be."

The. This is the greatest error of all the rest: The man should be put into the lantern: how is it else the man i'the moon?

Dem. He dares not come there for the candle; for, you see, it is already in snuff.[16]

Hip. I am aweary of this moon: Would he would change!

The. It appears, by his small light of discretion, that he is in the wane: but yet, in courtesy, in all reason, we must stay the time.

Lys. Proceed, moon.

Moon. All that I have to say is, to tell you, that the lantern is the moon; I, the man in the moon; this thorn-bush, my thorn-bush; and this dog, my dog.

Dem. Why, all these should be in the lantern; for they are in the moon. But, silence! here comes Thisbe.

Enter THISBE.

This. "This is old Ninny's tomb: Where is my love?"

[16] An equivoque. *Snuff* signifies both the cinder of a candle and hasty anger.

Lion. "Oh —" [*The Lion roars.* — THISBE *runs off.*

Dem. Well roar'd, lion.

The. Well run, Thisbe.

Hip. Well shone, moon. — Truly, the moon shines with a good grace.

[*The Lion tears* THISBE'S *mantle, and exit.*

The. Well mous'd,[17] lion.

Dem. And then came Pyramus.

Lys. And so the moon vanish'd.

Enter PYRAMUS.

Pyr. "Sweet moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beams:
I thank thee, moon, for shining now so bright;
For, by thy gracious, golden, glittering gleams,
I trust to taste of truest Thisby's sight.
But stay; — O spite! but mark, poor knight,
What dreadful dole is here!
Eyes, do you see? how can it be?
O dainty duck! O dear!
Thy mantle good, what! stain'd with blood?
Approach, ye furies fell!
O fates! come, come; cut thread and thrum;
Quail, crush, conclude, and quell!"

The. This passion, and the death of a dear friend, would go near to make a man look sad.

Hip. Beshrew my heart, but I pity the man.

Pyr. "O, wherefore, Nature, didst thou lions frame?
Since lion vile hath here deflour'd my dear:
Which is — no, no — which was the fairest dame,
That liv'd, that lov'd, that lik'd, that look'd with cheer.
Come, tears, confound; out, sword, and wound
The pap of Pyramus:

[17] To *mouse*, according to Malone, signified *to mammock* or tear in pieces, as a cat tears a mouse.

Ay, that left pap, where heart doth hop: —
Thus die I, thus, thus, thus!
Now am I dead, now am I fled;
My soul is in the sky:
Tongue, lose thy light! moon, take thy flight!
Now die, die, die, die, die."

[*Dies. — Exit Moonshine.*

Dem. No die, but an ace, for him; for he is but one.

Lys. Less than an ace, man, for he is dead; he is nothing.

The. With the help of a surgeon, he might yet recover, and prove an ass.

Hip. How chance moonshine is gone, before Thisbe comes back and finds her lover?

The. She will find him by star-light.—Here she comes; and her passion ends the play.

Enter THISBE.

Hip. Methinks, she should not use a long one for such a Pyramus: I hope she will be brief.

Dem. A mote will turn the balance, which Pyramus, which Thisbe, is the better; he for a man, God warrant us; she for a woman, God bless us.[18]

Lys. She hath spied him already with those sweet eyes.

Dem. And thus she moans, *videlicet.* —

This. "Asleep, my love? what, dead, my dove?
O Pyramus, arise:
Speak, speak! Quite dumb? Dead, dead! A tomb
Must cover thy sweet eyes.

[18] This passage, beginning at *he for a man*, is from the quartos, and is left out of modern editions generally, which herein follow the folio. It was probably omitted in 1623 on account of the statute, passed after the quartos were printed, against the irreverent use of the sacred Name. H.

These lily lips, this cherry nose,
These yellow cowslip cheeks,
Are gone, are gone: Lovers, make moan!
His eyes were green as leeks.
O! sisters three, come, come, to me,
With hands as pale as milk;
Lay them in gore, since you have shore
With shears his thread of silk.
Tongue, not a word:—come, trusty sword;
Come, blade, my breast imbrue:
And farewell, friends;—thus Thisby ends.
Adieu, adieu, adieu." [*Dies.*

The. Moonshine and lion are left to bury the dead.

Dem. Ay, and wall too.

Bot. No, I assure you; the wall is down that parted their fathers. Will it please you to see the epilogue, or to hear a Bergomask dance,[19] between two of our company?

The. No epilogue, I pray you; for your play needs no excuse. Never excuse; for when the players are all dead, there need none to be blamed. Marry, if he that writ it had play'd Pyramus, and hang'd himself in Thisbe's garter, it would have been a fine tragedy: and so it is, truly; and very notably discharg'd. But come, your Bergomask: let your epilogue alone. [*Here a dance of Clowns.*
The iron tongue of midnight hath told twelve:—
Lovers, to bed; 'tis almost fairy time.
I fear we shall outsleep the coming morn,
As much as we this night have overwatch'd.
This palpable-gross play hath well beguil'd

[19] A rustic dance framed in imitation of the people of *Bergamasco*, (a province in the state of Venice,) who are ridiculed as being more clownish in their manners and dialect than any other people of Italy. The *lingua rustica* of the buffoons, in the old Italian comedies, is an imitation of their jargon.

The heavy gait of night. — Sweet friends, to bed. —
A fortnight hold we this solemnity
In nightly revels, and new jollity. [*Exeunt*

SCENE II.

Enter PUCK.

Puck. Now the hungry lion roars,[1]
And the wolf behowls the moon;
Whilst the heavy ploughman snores,
All with weary task fordone.
Now the wasted brands do glow,
Whilst the scritch-owl, scritching loud,
Puts the wretch, that lies in woe,
In remembrance of a shroud.
Now it is the time of night,
That the graves all gaping wide,
Every one lets forth his sprite,
In the church-way paths to glide:
And we fairies, that do run
By the triple Hecate's team,
From the presence of the sun,
Following darkness like a dream,
Now are frolic; not a mouse
Shall disturb this hallow'd house:
I am sent with broom, before,
To sweep the dust behind the door.[2]

[1] Upon this passage Coleridge thus remarks in his Literary Remains: "Very Anacreon in perfectness, proportion, graze, and spontaneity! So far it is Greek; — but then add, O! what wealth, what wild ranging, and yet what compression and condensation, of English fancy! In truth, there is nothing in Anacreon more perfect than these thirty [twenty?] lines, or half so rich and imaginative. They form a speckless diamond." H.

[2] That is, "to sweep the dust *from* behind the door." Mr. Collier informs us that on the title-page of the tract, "Robin Good fellow, his Mad Pranks and Merry Jests," Puck is represented in

Enter OBERON *and* TITANIA, *with their Train.*

Obe. Through this house give glimmering light,
By the dead and drowsy fire:
Every elf, and fairy sprite,
Hop as light as bird from brier;
And this ditty after me
Sing, and dance it trippingly.

Tita. First, rehearse your song by rote,
To each word a warbling note:
Hand in hand with fairy grace
Will we sing, and bless this place.

[*They sing and dance*[3]

Obe. Now, until the break of day,
Through this house each fairy stray.
To the best bride-bed will we,
Which by us shall blessed be;[4]

a wood-cut with a broom over his shoulder. The whole fairy nation, for which he served as prime minister, were great sticklers for cleanliness. For some notices of their doings on this score, see The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act v. sc. 5, note 8. H.

[3] The stage-direction here is usually printed as if what follows were the fairies' song; which is clearly wrong, the following lines being *spoken* by Oberon, after the song and dance are ended. As for the fairies' song on this occasion, it has never, so far as we know, been heard of since; and however we may regret the loss, it is hardly fair to put Oberon's speech in the place of it. The mistake was first made in the folio of 1623; the editors probably knowing of nothing else that they *could* print as the song. H.

[4] This ceremony was in old times used at all marriages. Mr. Douce has given the formula from the Manual for the use of Salisbury. In the French romance of Melusine, the Bishop who marries her to Raymondin blesses the nuptial bed. The ceremony is there represented in a very ancient cut. The good prelate is sprinkling the parties with holy water. Sometimes, during the benediction, the married couple only *sat* on the bed; but they generally received a portion of the consecrated bread and wine. It was ordained, in the year 1577, that the ceremony of blessing the nuptial bed should be performed in the daytime, and in the presence of the bride and bridegroom, and of their nearest relations, only.

And the issue, there create,
Ever shall be fortunate.
So shall all the couples three
Ever true in loving be;
And the blots of nature's hand
Shall not in their issue stand:
Never mole, hare-lip, nor scar,
Nor mark prodigious, such as are
Despised in nativity,
Shall upon their children be. —
With this field-dew consecrate,
Every fairy take his gait,
And each several chamber bless,[b]
Through this palace with sweet peace;
And the owner of it blest,
Ever shall in safety rest.
Trip away; make no stay;
Meet me all by break of day.

[*Exeunt* OBERON, TITANIA, *and Train*

Puck. If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumber'd here,
While these visions did appear;
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream,
Gentles, do not reprehend:
If you pardon, we will mend.

[b] Of this ancient rite Chaucer gives an example in The Milleres Tale:

"Ther with the nightspel said he anon rightes,
On foure halves of the hous aboute,
And on the threswold of the dore withoute.
Jesu Crist, and Seint Benedight,
Blisse this hous from every wicked wight,
Fro the nightes mare" H

And, as I'm an honest Puck,[6]
If we have unearned luck
Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue,[7]
We will make amends ere long;
Else the Puck a liar call:
So, good night unto you all.
Give me your hands,[8] if we be friends,
And Robin shall restore amends. [*Exit.*

Puck, it seems, was a suspicious name, which makes that this merry, mischievous gentleman does well to assert his honesty. As for the name itself, it was no better than *fiend* or *devil*. In Pierce Ploughman's Vision, some personage is called *helle Pouke*. And the name thus occurs in Spenser's Epithalamion:

"Ne let *the pouke*, nor other evill sprights,
Ne let mischievous witches with theyr charmes,
Ne let hobgoblins, names whose sence we see not,
Fray us with things that be not." F

[7] That is, hisses.
[8] Clap your hands, give us your applause.

THE MERRY PRANKS OF ROBIN GOODFELLOW,

TO THE TUNE OF DULCINEA.[1]

From Oberon, in fairye land,
The king of ghosts and shadowes there,
Mad Robin I, at his command,
Am sent to viewe the night-sports here.
What ravell rout is kept about,
In every corner where I go,
I will o'ersee, and merry bee,
And make good sport, with ho, ho, ho!

More swift than lightening can I flye
About this aery welkin soone,
And, in a minute's space, descrye
Each thing that's done belowe the moone:
There's not a hag or ghost shall wag,
Or cry, 'ware goblins! where I go;
But Robin I their feates will spy,
And send them home, with ho, ho, ho!

Whene'er such wanderers I meete,
As from their night-sports they trudge home:
With counterfeiting voice I greete,
And call them on, with me to roame
Thro' woods, thro' lakes, thro' bogs, thro' brakes;
Or else, unseen, with them I go,
All in the nicke to play some tricke
And frolicke it, with ho, ho, ho!

Sometimes I meete them like a man;
Sometimes, an ox, sometimes, a hound;
And to a horse I turn me can;
To trip and trot about them round.
But if, to ride, my backe they stride,
More swift than wind away I go;

[1] This title is given by Bishop Percy from an old black-letter copy in the British Museum.

O'er hedge and lands, thro' pools and ponds.
I whirry, laughing, ho, ho, ho!

When lads and lasses merry be,
With possets and with juncates fine;
Unseene of all the company,
I eat their cakes and sip their wine;
And, to make sport, I fart and snort,
And out the candles I do blow:
The maids I kiss; they shrieke, — Who's this?
I answer nought, but ho, ho, ho!

Yet now and then, the maids to please,
At midnight I card up their wooll;
And while they sleepe and take their ease,
With wheel to threads their flax I pull
I grind at mill their malt up still;
I dress their hemp, I spin their tow·
If any wake, and would me take,
I wend me, laughing, ho, ho, ho!

When house or harth doth sluttish lye,
I pinch the maidens black and blue;
The bed-clothes from the bed pull I,
And lay them naked all to view:
'Twixt sleepe and wake, I do them take,
And on the key-cold floor them throw:
If out they cry, then forth I fly,
And loudly laugh out, ho, ho, ho!

When any need to borrowe ought,
We lend them what they do require;
And for the use demand we nought:
Our owne is all we do desire.
If, to repay, they do delay,
Abroad amongst them then I go,
And night by night I them affright
With pinchings, dreames, and ho, ho, ho!

When lazie queans have nought to do,
But study how to cog and lye;
To make debate and mischief too,
'Twixt one another secretlye:

I marke their gloze, and it disclose
To them whom they have wronged so;
When I have done, I get me gone,
And leave them scolding, ho, ho, ho!

When men do traps and engins set
In loope-holes, where the vermine creepe,
Who, from their foldes and houses, get
Their duckes and geese, and lambes and sheepe;
I spy the gin, and enter in,
And seeme a vermine taken so;
But when they there approach me neare,
I leap out laughing, ho, ho, ho!

By wells and rills, in meadowes greene,
We nightly dance our hey-dey guise;
And to our fairye king and queene
We chant our moonlight minstrelsies:
When larks 'gin sing, away we fling;
And babes new-borne steal as we go,
And elfe in bed we leave instead,
And wend us laughing, ho, ho, ho!

From hay-bred Merlin's time have I
Thus nightly revell'd to and fro;
And for my pranks men call me by
The name of Robin Goodfellow.
Fiends, ghosts, and sprites, who haunt the nightes,
The hags and goblins, do me know;
And beldames old my feates have told;
So, *Vale, Vale!* ho, ho, ho![2]

[2] This ballad has been generally attributed to Ben Jonson and Mr. Collier has a version in a manuscript of the time, with the initials B. J. at the end. This copy, he says, varies somewhat from that given above, and has an additional stanza, which we subjoin:

"When as my fellow elfes and I
In circled ring do trip around,
If that our sports by any eye
Do happen to be seene or found;
If that they no words do say,
But *mum* continue as they go,
Each night I do put groat in shoe,
And wind out laughing, ho, ho, ho!" H.

INTRODUCTION

TO

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST.

Love's Labour's Lost was first published in a quarto pamphlet of thirty-eight leaves in 1598, the title-page reading as follows: "A pleasant-conceited Comedy called Love's Labour's Lost: As it was presented before her Highness this last Christmas: Newly corrected and augmented: By W. Shakespeare. Imprinted at London by W. W. for Cuthbert Burby: 1598." There was no other known edition of the play till the folio of 1623, where it is the seventh in the division of Comedies. From the repetition of certain errors of the press, it is quite probable that the second copy was reprinted from the first; while, on the other hand, there are certain differences that look as if another authority had in some points been consulted: the editors of the folio probably taking the quarto as their standard, and occasionally having recourse to a play-house manuscript. In the quarto neither scenes nor acts are distinguished; in the folio only the latter; and even here, as may easily be seen, the division into acts is very unequal and inartificial: yet no modern edition has ventured upon any change in this respect.

In the Accounts of the Revels at Court, under the date of January, 1605, occurs the following entry: "Between New-years Day and Twelfth Day, a play of Love's Labour's Lost." As success on the public stage was generally at that time the main reason of a play's being selected for performance at court, we may infer that this play continued popular after many better ones had been written. The play was also entered in the Stationers' Books, January 22, 1607, the right of it being passed over from Burby to Ling, probably because the latter contemplated a new edition. The design, however, if any such there were, seems to have been given up, as no impression of that date has come down to us.

Love's Labour's Lost is mentioned in the list of Shakespeare's plays given by Francis Meres in 1598. The same year one Robert

Tofte put forth a poem entitled "Alba the Months Minde of a Melancholy Lover," wherein the play is thus referred to:

"Love's Labour Lost! I once did see a play
Ycleped so, so called to my paine,
Which I to heare to my small joy did stay,
Giving attendance on my froward dame:
My misgiving mind presaging to me ill,
Yet was I drawn to see it 'gainst my will.

This play no play, but plague, was unto me.
For there I lost the love I liked most;
And what to others seemde a jest to be,
I that in earnest found unto my cost.
To every one, save me, 'twas comicall,
While tragic-like to me it did befall.

Each actor plaid in cunning wise his part,
But chiefly those entrapt in Cupid's snare;
Yet all was fained, 'twas not from the hart,
They seeme to grieve, but yet they felt no eare;
'Twas I that grief indeed did beare in brest;
The others did but make a shew in jest."

These are all the contemporary notices of the play that have reached us. In our Introduction to The Two Gentlemen of Verona we have stated our main reasons for assigning an earlier date to the Poet's first dramatic efforts than has been generally supposed. That this play was among the earliest scarce admits of question, from the character of the thing itself. Though it be apparently designed as a satire upon book-men in general, yet it displays in almost every part, and a good deal more than any other of the Poet's dramas, just such a preponderance of book-knowledge as were to be looked for in one fresh from school. Moreover, after the first writing a considerable time must naturally have passed before it was "newly corrected and augmented," as stated in the title-page of the quarto. There may be some question as to what year "it was presented before her Highness;" but as the year was then reckoned from the twenty-fifth of March, it seems quite likely that "this last Christmas" refers to the Christmas of 1593. Though we need not suppose so many as ten years to have elapsed between the writing and the revising, yet there is nothing that apparently makes against such a supposal. And Tofte's expression, "I *once* did see a play," may well enough infer that it was some years since he saw it.

The fact of the play's having been "corrected and *augmented*," of course invalidates whatsoever of evidence on this score might else be drawn from allusions to contemporary matters. The

"dancing horse," spoken of in Act i. sc. 2, is plainly an allusion of this sort. Bankes and his wonderful horse made their debut in London in 1589. But all that can be thence inferred is, that the passage in question was written after that date; and Bankes and his horse were so much and so long distinguished, that the reference may well enough have been made eight or nine years after their first appearance, when the play was revised. The many allusions to the same matter in other writers of the time show that it was a more remarkable performance than to pass out of thought with the day that brought it forth; though much of this celebrity was doubtless owing to the alleged fate of Bankes and his horse when they fell under the papal discipline. The "finished representation of colloquial excellence," as Dr. Johnson calls it, at the opening of Act v., has been thought to have been borrowed from a passage in Sidney's Arcadia, which came out in 1590. But the resemblance is not so close but that it may very well have been a mere coincidence. The passage is Sir Philip's fine description of Parthenia: "That which made her fairness much the fairer was that it was but the fair embassador of a most fair mind, full of wit, and a wit which delighted more to judge itself than to show itself: her speech being as rare as precious; her silence without sullenness; her modesty without affectation; her shamefastness without ignorance: in sum, one that to praise well, one must first set down with himself what it is to be excellent." Even granting the imitation in this case, still there is no reason but that the similar passage may have first appeared in the augmented copy of the play. We lay no stress on the circumstance that the Arcadia was considerably read in manuscript before it was printed, and so may have come to the Poet's knowledge before the original writing of Love's Labour's Lost; for we suppose this play to have been one of the exhibitions that brought the Author into Sir Philip's acquaintance, and recommended him to Southampton's patronage. As for the notion of certain critics, that Holofernes was meant for satire upon John Florio, whose Second Fruits appeared in 1591, containing some reflections on the indecorum of the English stage, we cannot discover the slightest ground for it. Shakespeare, no doubt, had ample occasion to laugh at the pedantry of pedagogues long before he knew any thing of Florio.

Internal evidence in such questions is necessarily a matter of individual judgment and opinion; so that no great weight can be given it, save where we have a concurrence of several experienced and judicious minds. Here, however, the best critics all agree in fixing the date in accordance with whatsoever of evidence is thus producible from without. Coleridge in 1819 set it down as a "juvenile drama," and as "Shakespeare's earliest dramatic attempt, — perhaps even prior in conception to the Venus and Adonis, and planned before he left Stratford;" and his judgment herein is the more considerable, forasmuch as he once thought otherwise

He remarks, that "the characters of this play are either imperson ated out of Shakespeare's own multiformity by imaginative self-position, or out of such as a country town and a schoolboy's observation might supply;" and that "the frequency of the rhymes, the sweetness as well as the smoothness of the metre, and the number of acute and fancifully-illustrated aphorisms, are all as they ought to be in a poet's youth." Making due allowance for certain passages which show a more experienced hand, and were probably written in at the revisal, we apprehend that few will dissent from the judgment here given, so far as it bears upon the date of the original composition; though, as to the characters, we confess that the higher ones seem "impersonated" rather at second hand and from books, than either out of the Poet's "observation" or out of his "own multiformity."

For the plot and matter of this play no foreign sources have been identified; and the amount of research spent for that purpose in vain leaves little room to doubt that the whole was the offspring of the Poet's invention. Which only favours the conclusion, that Shakespeare, in common with the greatest dramatists before him, though probably without knowing it, in proportion as he came to understand his art and to be formed and furnished for its service, cared less for mere novelty, and took more to such subjects as were already fixed in the popular belief and familiar to the minds of his audience. It should be observed, however, that in the original copies Armado and Holofernes are often designated by their characters, not by their names, the former being called The Braggart, the latter The Pedant; which Mr. Collier regards as indicating that at the time of writing this play the Author had some acquaintance with the nature of the Italian comic perform ances, where such characters were quite common; and he points out a strong resemblance between these personages and two that figure in *Gl' Ingannati*, the braggart under the name of Giglio, and the other under that of *M. Piero Pedante*. *Gl' Ingannati* is one of the Italian plays spoken of in our Introduction to Twelfth Night, as having, *perhaps*, contributed something towards that delectable comedy. Besides the scarce-perceptible footprints in this quarter, the Poet's reading may be more clearly traced among the Spanish romances of chivalry; and indeed, as a clever writer hath remarked, "the story has most of the features which would be derived from an acquaintance with the ancient romances." An apt instance of this is furnished in the King's description of "this child of fancy, that Armado hight," in the first act. And Coleridge speaks of the extravagant whim of the leading characters as being "not altogether improbable to those who are conversant in the history of the middle ages, with their Courts of Love, and all that lighter drapery of chivalry, which engaged even mighty kings with a sort of serio-comic interest, and may well be supposed to have occupied more completely the smaller princes, at a

time when the noble's or prince's court contained the only theatre of a domain or principality."

We have already remarked upon the higher characters of this play as appearing to have been drawn rather from books than from life. They have little of the close compacting of living power, which so marks the Poet's delineations generally, and which naturally results in distinctive features and characteristic traits. We can scarce distinguish and remember them as individuals: they run together, as it were, in our thoughts, as being rather personified whimsicalities and affectations than affected and whimsical persons; are not fully cut out and rounded into severalty; but appear somehow too much like the same thing under several variations: in short, they affect us more as ingeniously-wrought figures and images of men and women, than as real men and women themselves; though we must confess that something of a determinate and specific individuality is given to Biron and Rosaline, so that we take up a more distinct impression and carry away a much clearer remembrance of them. Thus they differ from Shakespeare's other representations very much as a portrait taken from the life differs from a mere copy; which a practised eye will readily distinguish, without being told the facts. So that the play thus far almost reverses the Poet's general rule; the characters existing rather for the sake of the plot, than the plot for the sake of the characters; these being indeed mainly used as a sort of ground for the projecting and carrying on of a dramatic device. Thus the thing, at least in this part, is not so much a play as a show. Hence, perhaps, the comparatively little interest that readers generally take in it: for a mere story or show is interesting only while it is new; whereas a work of art, a real expression of character and life, grows in interest as we grow more acquainted with it

The other set of characters, however, especially Costard, Armado, and Moth, are of a very different stamp. Here the Poet was evidently feeding of the fruit that grows from observation, not "of the dainties that are bred in a book:" here he is plainly at work in a vein where his eye and hand are at home; moulding his forms out of the materials amidst which his life has been passed and his thinking shaped. For whatsoever prototypes of Armado may be found in Italian comedies, there is no denying that Shakespeare constructed that "mighty potentate of nonsense" in the strength of a knowledge far more living and operative than could have been gained by mere reading. In this case only a Spanish name was given to an old English substance: Coleridge informs us that even in his time the character was not extinct in the cheaper inns of North Wales. As for Holofernes the schoolmaster, and Sir Nathaniel the curate, those prodigious epicures of learned vocables, who "have been at a great feast of languages, and stolen the scraps," Shakespeare's age was just the time for such characters to be generated, and trained on into ludicrous perfection

The traits uppermost in them were but the natural working down of what was then a leading aim with the highest and wittiest in society,—a continual effort to appear clever and spirited, to shine and entertain by talking out of the common way; so that "the courtiers, and men of rank and fashion, affected a display of wit, point, and sententious observation, that would be deemed intolerable at present." This straining after mental ornament, which so filled the palace and the cottage with every variety of small wit, was indeed a disease, and perhaps this play yields proof enough that Shakespeare viewed it as such: yet there is no telling how much it may have had to do with the discipline, which taught Hooker to write the richest, noblest, most varied and musical prose style that has yet been written in the English tongue. Nor in our time, as perhaps in all times when learning is duly prized, is there wanting a class of men whose ordinary talk shows them to "have lived long on the alms-basket of words;" thus eversing the fine old maxim of Roger Ascham, "to speak as the common people do, to think as wise men do."

Whatsoever, therefore, may have been the Poet's design, at all events the play, throughout, is a sham-fight of words; and perhaps it may be justly regarded as a piece of good-natured irony on the abuse of learning, and a merry caricature of intellectual vanity and display. In this view the whole forms a capital take-off of the shallow, vain philosophy which puts men upon the study of words to the neglect of things, and prompts them to seek after wisdom by using other people's eyes instead of their own;—the same habit of mind which may be so often seen drawing out the smallest possible amount of matter into an infinite agitation of wit. It is not without significance, therefore, that the higher characters are represented all along as hunting and straining after puns, and quibbles, and clenches, and conceits, thus spending their superfluous mental activity in learned trifling and elaborate folly. Perhaps Biron is the only one of them that has wisdom enough to catch and save him when his wit breaks down. Meanwhile the lower characters, though seemingly the opposite of the former, in reality but present the more ludicrous and farcical side of the same thing; the readiness with which they rattle off quips and quirks, and twist language into fantastical shapes, being an apt commentary on the tendency of the study, to which their betters have vowed themselves, to degenerate into verbal tricks and bookish formalities.

As a work of art, perhaps the chief merit of the play lies in the unity and harmony of feeling that pervade it. The leading characters are all young, and there is an answering spirit of youth in every thing about them, as if surrounding objects had caught from them the trick of hilarity, and must needs keep time with the beating of their hearts. It is by thus diffusing over all things the tone and temper of his persons, that the Poet often so completely transports us into their whereabout, and makes us see with their

eyes. Here as elsewhere, however, the means whereby he does this are so cunningly hidden as to suggest that art with him was instinct. The two sets of persons, moreover, are wrought in together with great skill; while with the higher ones are interwoven several passages of superb poetry, as if on purpose to make up in some measure for the comparatively unvital and inorganic structure of the characters. One need not be very deeply skilled in Shakespeare, to be able to distinguish with great probability the main passages that appeared first in the augmented copy. At the head of these, of course, stands Biron's speech near the close of the fourth act, to "prove our loving lawful and our faith not torn;" which Coleridge thus describes: "It is logic clothed in rhetorie; — but observe how Shakespeare, in his two-fold being of poet and philosopher, avails himself of it to convey profound truths in the most lively images, — the whole remaining faithful to the character supposed to utter the lines, and the expressions themselves constituting a further development of that character." Scarcely inferior to this, except as being shorter, are two speeches of Rosaline, one near the opening of Act ii. describing Biron, the other at the close of the play laying down the terms upon which he may gain her hand. Of the strange song at the end, made up as it is of the most homely and familiar words and images, Mr. Knight has remarked, what is indeed sufficiently obvious, how fitly it serves "to mark, by an emphatic close, the triumph of simplicity over false refinement."

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

FERDINAND, King of Navarre.
BIRON,
LONGAVILLE, } Lords, attending on the King.
DUMAIN,
BOYET,
MERCADE, } Lords, attending on the Princess of France.
DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO, a fantastical Spaniard
SIR NATHANIEL, a Curate
HOLOFERNES, a Schoolmaster
DULL, a Constable.
COSTARD, a Clown.
MOTH, Page to Armado.
A Forester.

PRINCESS of France.
ROSALINE,
MARIA, } Ladies, attending on the Princess.
KATHARINE.
JAQUENETTA, a country Wench.

Officers and others, attendants on the King and Princess.

SCENE, Navarre

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST.

ACT I.

SCENE I. Navarre. A Park with a Palace in it

Enter the KING, BIRON, LONGAVILLE, *and* DUMAIN.

King. LET fame, that all hunt after in their lives,
Live register'd upon our brazen tombs,
And then grace us in the disgrace of death;
When, spite of cormorant devouring Time,
The endeavour of this present breath may buy
That honour, which shall bate his scythe's keen edge,
And make us heirs of all eternity.
Therefore, brave conquerors! — for so you are,
That war against your own affections,
And the huge army of the world's desires, —
Our late edict shall strongly stand in force:
Navarre shall be the wonder of the world;
Our court shall be a little Academe,
Still and contemplative in living art.
You three, Biron,[1] Dumain, and Longaville,
Have sworn for three years' term to live with me
My fellow-scholars, and to keep those statutes,

[1] In the old copies this name is uniformly spelt *Berowne*, thus giving the proper pronunciation of the French *Biron*. Of course the verse requires that the accent be on the last syllable. H.

That are recorded in this schedule here:
Your oaths are past, and now subscribe your names;
That his own hand may strike his honour down,
That violates the smallest branch herein:
If you are arm'd to do, as sworn to do,
Subscribe to your deep oaths, and keep it too.[2]

Lon. I am resolv'd: 'tis but a three years' fast;
The mind shall banquet, though the body pine:
Fat paunches have lean pates; and dainty bits
Make rich the ribs, but bankrupt quite the wits.

Dum. My loving lord, Dumain is mortified:
The grosser manner of these world's delights
He throws upon the gross world's baser slaves:
To love, to wealth, to pomp, I pine and die;
With all these living in philosophy.

Bir. I can but say their protestation over;
So much, dear liege, I have already sworn,
That is, to live and study here three years.
But there are other strict observances:
As, not to see a woman in that term;
Which, I hope well, is not enrolled there:
And, one day in a week to touch no food,
And but one meal on every day beside;
The which, I hope, is not enrolled there:
And then, to sleep but three hours in the night,
And not be seen to wink of all the day;
(When I was wont to think no harm all night,
And make a dark night too of half the day;)
Which, I hope well, is not enrolled there:
O! these are barren tasks, too hard to keep;
Not to see ladies — study — fast — not sleep.

[2] *It* evidently refers, not to *oaths*, but to the preceding clause keep your *subscription*, or what you have sworn. So that the changing of *oaths* into *oath*, or of *it* into *them*, is quite unnecessary. H.

King. Your oath is pass'd to pass away from these.

Bir. Let me say no, my liege, an if you please;
I only swore to study with your grace,
And stay here in your court for three years' space.

Lon. You swore to that, Biron, and to the rest.

Bir. By yea and nay, sir, then I swore in jest. —
What is the end of study? let me know.

King. Why, that to know, which else we should not know.

Bir. Things hid and barr'd, you mean, from common sense?

King. Ay, that is study's god-like recompense.

Bir. Come on, then; I will swear to study so,
To know the thing I am forbid to know:
As thus — to study where I well may dine,
When I to feast expressly am forbid;
Or study where to meet some mistress fine,
When mistresses from common sense are hid;
Or, having sworn too hard-a-keeping oath,
Study to break it, and not break my troth.
If study's gain be thus, and this be so,
Study knows that which yet it doth not know:
Swear me to this, and I will ne'er say no.

King. These be the stops that hinder study quite,
And train our intellects to vain delight.

Bir. Why, all delights are vain; but that most vain,
Which, with pain purchas'd, doth inherit pain:
As, painfully to pore upon a book,
To seek the light of truth: while truth the while
Doth falsely [3] blind the eyesight of his look:
Light, seeking light, doth light of light beguile:

[3] Dishonestly, treacherously.

So, ere you find where light in darkness lies,
Your light grows dark by losing of your eyes.
Study me how to please the eye indeed,
By fixing it upon a fairer eye;
Who dazzling so, that eye shall be his heed,
And give him light that it was blinded by.[4]
Study is like the heaven's glorious sun,
That will not be deep-search'd with saucy looks:
Small have continual plodders ever won,
Save base authority from others' books.
These earthly godfathers of heaven's lights,
That give a name to every fixed star,
Have no more profit of their shining nights,
Than those that walk, and wot not what they are.
Too much to know is, to know nought but fame;
And every godfather can give a name.

King. How well he's read, to reason against reading!

Dum. Proceeded well, to stop all good proceeding![5]

Lon. He weeds the corn, and still lets grow the weeding.

Bir. The spring is near, when green geese are a-breeding.

Dum. How follows that?

Bir. Fit in his place and time.

Dum. In reason nothing.

Bir. Something then in rhyme.

King. Biron is like an envious sneaping[6] frost,
That bites the first-born infants of the spring.

[4] The meaning is, that when his eye is *dazzled*, or made weak by fixing it upon a fairer eye, the latter shall be his *heed* or guide, his *lode-star*, and give light to him that was blinded by it.

[5] *Proceed* was an academical term for taking a degree; as, to *proceed* master of arts. H.

[6] That is, nipping. In The Winter's Tale, Act i. sc. 1, we have *sneaping* winds. To *sneap* is also to *check*, to *rebuke*.

Bir. Well, say I am: why should proud summer boast,
Before the birds have any cause to sing?
Why should I joy in any abortive birth?
At Christmas I no more desire a rose,
Than wish a snow in May's new-fangled shows;[7]
But like of each thing that in season grows.
So you, to study now it is too late,
Climb o'er the house to unlock the little gate.

King. Well, sit you out: go home, Biron; adieu!

Bir. No, my good lord; I have sworn to stay with you:
And, though I have for barbarism spoke more,
Than for that angel knowledge you can say,
Yet confident I'll keep what I have swore,
And bide the penance of each three years' day.
Give me the paper; let me read the same;
And to the strict'st decrees I'll write my name.

King. How well this yielding rescues thee from shame!

Bir. [*Reads.*] "Item, That no woman shall come within a mile of my court,"—Hath this been proclaimed?

Lon. Four days ago.

Bir. Let's see the penalty. [*Reads.*] "—on pain of losing her tongue."—Who devis'd this penalty?

Lon. Marry, that did I.

Bir. Sweet lord, and why?

Lon. To fright them thence with that dread penalty.

Bir. A dangerous law against gentility.[8] [*Reads.*]

[7] By these *shows* the Poet means *May-games*, at which a *snow* would be very unwelcome and unexpected.

[8] That is, *politeness, civility;* referring to the influence of woman in bringing or keeping man out of barbarism and brutality. H.

"Item, If any man be seen to talk with a woman
within the term of three years, he shall endure
such public shame as the rest of the court can pos-
sibly devise."—
This article, my liege, yourself must break;
For, well you know, here comes in embassy
The French king's daughter, with yourself to speak,—
A maid of grace, and complete majesty,—
About surrender-up of Aquitain
To her decrepit, sick, and bed-rid father:
Therefore this article is made in vain,
Or vainly comes the admired princess hither.

King. What say you, lords? why, this was quite forgot.

Bir. So study evermore is overshot:
While it doth study to have what it would,
It doth forget to do the thing it should;
And when it hath the thing it hunteth most,
'Tis won, as towns with fire; so won, so lost.

King. We must of force dispense with this decree
She must lie[9] here on mere necessity.

Bir. Necessity will make us all forsworn
Three thousand times within this three years' space;
For every man with his affects is born;
Not by might master'd, but by special grace:
If I break faith, this word shall speak for me,
I am forsworn on mere necessity.—
So to the laws at large I write my name; [*Subscribes.*
And he, that breaks them in the least degree,
Stands in attainder of eternal shame:
Suggestions[10] are to others, as to me;

[9] That is, *reside* here. So, in Sir Henry Wotton's equivocal definition: "An Ambassador is an honest man sent to *lie* abroad for the good of his country." *Affects*, in the third line below, was sometimes used for *affections*.

[10] Temptations.

But I believe, although I seem so loth,
I am the last that will last keep his oath.
But is there no quick[11] recreation granted?

King. Ay, that there is: our court, you know, is haunted
With a refined traveller of Spain;
A man in all the world's new fashion planted,
That hath a mint of phrases in his brain:
One, whom the music of his own vain tongue
Doth ravish, like enchanting harmony;
A man of complements,[12] whom right and wrong
Have chose as umpire of their mutiny:
This child of fancy, that Armado hight,
For interim to our studies, shall relate
In high-born words the worth of many a knight
From tawny Spain, lost in the world's debate.
How you delight, my lords, I know not, I;
But, I protest, I love to hear him lie,
And I will use him for my minstrelsy.[13]

Bir. Armado is a most illustrious wight,
A man of fire-new[14] words, fashion's own knight.

Lon. Costard, the swain, and he shall be our sport;
And, so to study, three years is but short.

Enter DULL, *with a letter, and* COSTARD.

Dull. Which is the duke's own person?

Bir. This, fellow: What wouldst?

Dull. I myself reprehend his own person, for I

[11] Lively, sprightly.

[12] *Complements* are whatsoever finishes or *completes* a thing, supplying what were else wanting. hence often used of old for *accomplishments*, or ceremonious observances. — *Hight*, in the second line below, is an old word for *is called*. H.

[13] I will make use of him instead of a *minstrel*, whose occupation was to relate fabulous stories.

[14] That is, new from the forge; we have still retained a similar mode of speech in the colloquial phrase *brand-new*

am his grace's tharborough:[15] but I would see his own person in flesh and blood.

Bir. This is he.

Dull. Signior Arm — Arm — commends you. There's villainy abroad: this letter will tell you more.

Cost. Sir, the contempts thereof are as touching me.

King. A letter from the magnificent Armado.

Bir. How low soever the matter, I hope in God for high words.

Lon. A high hope for a low having: God grant us patience!

Bir. To hear, or forbear laughing?

Lon. To hear meekly, sir, and to laugh moderately; or to forbear both.

Bir. Well, sir, be it as the style[16] shall give us cause to climb in the merriness.

Cost. The matter is to me, sir, as concerning Jaquenetta. The manner of it is, I was taken with the manner.[17]

Bir. In what manner?

Cost. In manner and form following, sir; all those three: I was seen with her in the manor-house, sitting with her upon the form, and taken following her into the park; which, put together, is, in manner and form following. Now, sir, for the manner — it is the manner of a man to speak to a woman: for the form, — in some form.

Bir. For the following, sir?

Cost. As it shall follow in my correction: And God defend the right!

[15] That is, third-borough, a peace-officer.

[16] A quibble is here intended between a *stile* and *style*.

[17] That is, *in the fact*. A thief is said to be taken with the manner, when he is taken with the thing stolen about him.

King. Will you hear this letter with attention?

Bir. As we would hear an oracle.

Cost. Such is the simplicity of man to hearken after the flesh.

King. [*Reads.*] "Great deputy, the welkin's vicegerent, and sole dominator of Navarre, my soul's earth's God, and body's fostering patron;" —

Cost. Not a word of Costard yet.

King. — "so it is," —

Cost. It may be so; but if he say it is so, he is, in telling true, but so, —

King. Peace!

Cost. — be to me, and every man that dares not fight!

King. No words.

Cost. — of other men's secrets, I beseech you.

King. — "so it is, besieged with sable-coloured melancholy. I did commend the black-oppressing humour to the most wholesome physic of thy health-giving air; and, as I am a gentleman, betook myself to walk. The time when? About the sixth hour; when beasts most graze, birds best peck, and men sit down to that nourishment which is called supper. So much for the time when: Now for the ground which; which, I mean, I walked upon: it is ycleped[18] thy park. Then for the place where; where, I mean, I did encounter that obscene and most preposterous event, that draweth from my snow-white pen the ebon-coloured ink, which here thou viewest, beholdest, surveyest, or seest. But to the place where: — It standeth north-north-east and by east from the west corner of thy curious-knotted garden.[19] There did I see that low-spirited swain, that base minnow of thy mirth," —

Cost. Me.

[18] *Called;* past tense of the verb to *clepe*.

[19] Ancient gardens abounded with *knots* or figures, of which the lines intersected each other. In the old books of gardening are devices for them

King. — "that unlettered small-knowing soul," --

Cost. Me.

King. — "that shallow vessel," —

Cost. Still me.

King. — "which, as I remember, hight Costard," —

Cost. O me!

King. — "sorted and consorted, contrary to thy established proclaimed edict and continent canon, with — with, O! with — but with this I passion to say wherewith," --

Cost. With a wench.

King. — "with a child of our grandmother Eve, a female; or, for thy more sweet understanding, a woman. Him I (as my ever-esteemed duty pricks me on) have sent to thee, to receive the meed of punishment, by thy sweet grace's officer, Antony Dull; a man of good repute, carriage, bearing, and estimation."

Dull. Me, an't shall please you; I am Antony Dull.

King. "For Jaquenetta, (so is the weaker vessel called, which I apprehended with the aforesaid swain,) I keep her as a vessel of thy law's fury; and shall, at the least of thy sweet notice, bring her to trial. Thine, in all compliments of devoted and heart-burning heat of duty,

DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO."

Bir. This is not so well as I looked for, but the best that ever I heard.

King. Ay, the best for the worst. But, sirrah, what say you to this?

Cost. Sir, I confess the wench.

King. Did you hear the proclamation?

Cost. I do confess much of the hearing it, but little of the marking of it.

King. It was proclaimed a year's imprisonment, to be taken with a wench.

Cost. I was taken with none, sir; I was taken with a damosel

King. Well, it was proclaimed damosel.

Cost. This was no damosel neither, sir; she was a virgin.

King. It is so varied too; for it was proclaimed, virgin.

Cost. If it were, I deny her virginity; I was taken with a maid.

King. This maid will not serve your turn, sir.

Cost. This maid will serve my turn, sir.

King. Sir, I will pronounce your sentence: You shall fast a week with bran and water.

Cost. I had rather pray a month with mutton and porridge.

King. And Don Armado shall be your keeper.—
My lord Biron, see him deliver'd o'er.—
And go we, lords, to put in practice that
Which each to other hath so strongly sworn.

[*Exeunt* KING, LONGAVILLE, *and* DUMAIN.

Bir. I'll lay my head to any good man's hat,
These oaths and laws will prove an idle scorn.—
Sirrah, come on.

Cost. I suffer for the truth, sir: for true it is, I was taken with Jaquenetta, and Jaquenetta is a true girl; and, therefore, welcome the sour cup of prosperity! Affliction may one day smile again, and till then, sit thee down, sorrow! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. ARMADO'S House in the Park.

Enter ARMADO *and* MOTH.

Arm. Boy, what sign is it, when a man of great spirit grows melancholy?

Moth. A great sign, sir, that he will look sad.

Arm. Why, sadness is one and the self-same thing, dear imp.[1]

Moth. No, no; O Lord! sir, no.

Arm. How canst thou part sadness and melancholy, my tender juvenal?[2]

Moth. By a familiar demonstration of the working, my tough senior.

Arm. Why tough senior? why tough senior?

Moth. Why tender juvenal? why tender juvenal?

Arm. I spoke it, tender juvenal, as a congruent epitheton, appertaining to thy young days, which we may nominate tender.

Moth. And I, tough senior, as an appertinent title to your old time, which we may name tough.

Arm. Pretty, and apt.

Moth. How mean you, sir? I pretty, and my saying apt? or I apt, and my saying pretty?

Arm. Thou pretty, because little.

Moth. Little pretty, because little: Wherefore apt?

Arm. And therefore apt, because quick.

Moth. Speak you this in my praise, master?

Arm. In thy condign praise.

[1] *Imp* literally means a graff, scion, or shoot of a tree; hence formerly used in a good sense for *offspring* or child. Thus, in the Introduction to Book i. of The Faerie Queene:

"And thou, most dreaded *impe* of highest Jove,
Faire Venus sonne, that with thy cruell dart
At that good Knight so cunningly didst rove,
That glorious fire it kindled in his hart."

And again, in the interview of Una and Prince Arthur, Book 1 Can. 9, stan. 6:

"'Well worthy *impe*,' said then the Lady gent,
'And pupil fitt for such a tutor's hand!'"

Of course every body knows the word is now used only for a wicked or mischievous being, — a child of the devil. H.

[2] That is, youth.

Moth. I will praise an eel with the same praise.

Arm. What! that an eel is ingenious?

Moth. That an eel is quick.

Arm. I do say, thou art quick in answers: Thou heatest my blood.

Moth. I am answer'd, sir.

Arm. I love not to be cross'd.

Moth. [*Aside.*] He speaks the mere contrary: crosses[3] love not him.

Arm. I have promis'd to study three years with the duke.

Moth. You may do it in an hour, sir.

Arm. Impossible.

Moth. How many is one thrice told?

Arm. I am ill at reckoning: it fits the spirit of a tapster.

Moth. You are a gentleman, and a gamester, sir.

Arm. I confess both: they are both the varnish of a complete man.

Moth. Then, I am sure, you know how much the gross sum of deuce-ace amounts to.

Arm. It doth amount to one more than two.

Moth. Which the base vulgar call three.

Arm. True.

Moth. Why, sir, is this such a piece of study? Now here 's three studied, ere you'll thrice wink: and how easy it is to put years to the word three, and study three years in two words, the dancing horse will tell you.[4]

[3] By *crosses* he means *money*. So, in As You Like It, the Clown says to Celia, "If I *should bear you*, I should bear no *cross*." Many coins were anciently marked with a *cross* on one side.

[4] The *dancing horse* was a very celebrated wonder of the Poet's time. He was the pupil and property of a person named Bankes. Sir Kenelm Digby says,—"He would restore a glove to the due

Arm. A most fine figure!

Moth. [*Aside.*] To prove you a cipher.

Arm. I will hereupon confess, I am in love: and, as it is base for a soldier to love, so am I in love with a base wench. If drawing my sword against the humour of affection would deliver me from the reprobate thought of it, I would take desire prisoner, and ransom him to any French courtier for a new-devis'd courtesy. I think scorn to sigh; methinks, I should out-swear Cupid. Comfort me, boy: What great men have been in love?

Moth. Hercules, master.

Arm. Most sweet Hercules!—More authority, dear boy, name more; and, sweet my child, let them be men of good repute and carriage.

Moth. Samson, master: he was a man of good carriage, great carriage! for he carried the town-gates on his back, like a porter; and he was in love.

Arm. O well-knit Samson! strong-jointed Samson! I do excel thee in my rapier, as much as thou didst me in carrying gates. I am in love too.—Who was Samson's love, my dear Moth?

Moth. A woman, master.

Arm. Of what complexion?

Moth. Of all the four, or the three, or the two, or one of the four.

owner, after the master had whispered the man's name in his ear; would tell the just number of pence in any piece of silver coin newly showed him by his master." Bankes showed his horse upon the continent, and in France had a narrow escape from the Capuchins, who suspected him of being in league with the devil. There was a report that he fell a victim to a similar suspicion at Rome. Ben Jonson, in his Epigrams, speaks of

> "Old Banks the juggler, our Pythagoras,
> Grave tutor to the learned horse; both which
> Being, beyond sea, burned for one witch
> Their spirits transmigrated to a cat" H

Arm. Tell me precisely of what complexion.

Moth. Of the sea-water green, sir.

Arm. Is that one of the four complexions?

Moth. As I have read, sir; and the best of them too.

Arm. Green, indeed, is the colour of lovers:[5] but to have a love of that colour, methinks, Samson had small reason for it. He, surely, affected her for her wit.

Moth. It was so, sir; for she had a green wit.

Arm. My love is most immaculate white and red.

Moth. Most maculate thoughts, master, are mask'd under such colours.

Arm. Define, define, well-educated infant.

Moth. My father's wit, and my mother's tongue, assist me!

Arm. Sweet invocation of a child; most pretty and pathetical!

Moth. If she be made of white and red,
Her faults will ne'er be known;
For blushing cheeks by faults are bred,
And fears by pale-white shown:
Then, if she fear, or be to blame,
By this you shall not know;
For still her cheeks possess the same,
Which native she doth owe.[6]

A dangerous rhyme, master, against the reason of white and red.

Arm. Is there not a ballad, boy, of the King and the Beggar?[7]

[5] The allusion probably is to the *willow*, the supposed ornament of unsuccessful lovers.

[6] Of which she is naturally possessed.

[7] This ballad, entitled King Cophetua and The Beggar-Maid, is printed in Percy's Reliques, Series First, Book ii.

Moth. The world was very guilty of such a ballad some three ages since: but, I think, now 'tis not to be found; or, if it were, it would neither serve for the writing, nor the tune.

Arm. I will have the subject newly writ o'er, that I may example my digression [8] by some mighty precedent. Boy, I do love that country girl, that I took in the park with the rational hind Costard: she deserves well.

Moth. [*Aside.*] To be whipp'd; and yet a better love than my master.

Arm. Sing, boy: my spirit grows heavy in love.

Moth. And that's great marvel, loving a light wench.

Arm. I say, sing.

Moth. Forbear till this company be past.

Enter DULL, COSTARD, *and* JAQUENETTA.

Dull. Sir, the duke's pleasure is, that you keep Costard safe: and you must let him take no delight, nor no penance; but a' must fast three days a-week: For this damsel, I must keep her at the park; she is allow'd for the day-woman.[9] Fare you well.

Arm. I do betray myself with blushing.—Maid

Jaq. Man.

Arm. I will visit thee at the lodge.

[8] *Digression* is here used in the sense of going astray, or diverging from the right. Thus, in the Poet's Rape of Lucrece:

"Then, my *digression* is so vile, so base,
That it will live engraven in my face."

And in Richard II., Act v. sc. 3, when York reveals the treacherous conspiracy of his son, Bolingbroke says,—

"And thy abundant goodness shall excuse
This deadly blot in thy *digressing* son." H.

[9] A *day-woman* is a *dairy-woman*. Johnson says *day* is an old word for milk. A dairy-maid is still called a *dey* or *day* in the northern parts of Scotland

Jaq. That's hereby.[10]

Arm. I know where it is situate.

Jaq. Lord, how wise you are!

Arm. I will tell thee wonders.

Jaq. With that face?[11]

Arm. I love thee.

Jaq. So I heard you say.

Arm. And so farewell.

Jaq. Fair weather after you!

Dull. Come, Jaquenetta, away.

[*Exeunt* DULL *and* JAQUENETTA.

Arm. Villain, thou shalt fast for thy offences, ere thou be pardoned.

Cost. Well, sir, I hope, when I do it, I shall do it on a full stomach.

Arm. Thou shalt be heavily punished.

Cost. I am more bound to you than your fellows, for they are but lightly rewarded.

Arm. Take away this villain: shut him up.

Moth. Come, you transgressing slave; away.

Cost. Let me not be pent up, sir: I will fast, being loose.

Moth. No, sir; that were fast and loose: thou shalt to prison.

Cost. Well, if ever I do see the merry days of desolation that I have seen, some shall see —

Moth. What shall some see?

Cost. Nay, nothing, master Moth, but what they look upon. It is not for prisoners to be too silent

[10] Jaquenetta and Armado are at cross-purposes. *Hereby* is used by her (as among the common people of some counties) in the sense of *as it may happen*. He takes it in the sense of *just by*.

[11] This odd phrase was still in use in Fielding's time, who, putting it into the mouth of Beau Didapper, thinks it necessary to apologize for its want of sense, by adding that it was taken verbatim from very polite conversation

in their words; and therefore I will say nothing: I thank God, I have as little patience as another man; and therefore I can be quiet.

[*Exeunt* MOTH *and* COSTARD

Arm. I do affect the very ground, which is base, where her shoe, which is baser, guided by her foot, which is basest, doth tread. I shall be forsworn, (which is a great argument of falsehood,) if I love: And how can that be true love, which is falsely attempted? Love is a familiar: love is a devil: there is no evil angel but love. Yet was Samson so tempted; and he had an excellent strength: yet was Solomon so seduced; and he had a very good wit. Cupid's butt-shaft [12] is too hard for Hercules' club, and therefore too much odds for a Spaniard's rapier. The first and second cause will not serve my turn; [13] the passado he respects not, the duello he regards not: his disgrace is to be called boy; but his glory is to subdue men. Adieu, valour! rust, rapier! be still, drum! for your armiger is in love; yea, he loveth. Assist me, some extemporal god of rhyme, for, I am sure, I shall turn sonnetist. Devise, wit! write, pen! for I am for whole volumes in folio. [*Exit.*

[12] A kind of *arrow* used for shooting at butts with. The *butt* was the place on which the mark to be shot at was placed.

[13] This is explained in Touchstone's learned discourse on the causes of quarrel, in As You Like It, Act v. sc. 4. R.

ACT II

SCENE I. Another part of the Park.

A Pavilion and Tents at a distance.

Enter the PRINCESS *of France*, ROSALINE, MARIA, KATHARINE, BOYET, *Lords, and other Attendants.*

Boy. Now, madam, summon up your dearest spirits:
Consider whom the king your father sends;
To whom he sends; and what's his embassy.
Yourself, held precious in the world's esteem;
To parley with the sole inheritor
Of all perfections that a man may owe,
Matchless Navarre; the plea of no less weight
Than Aquitain, a dowry for a queen.
Be now as prodigal of all dear grace,
As nature was in making graces dear,
When she did starve the general world beside,
And prodigally gave them all to you.

Prin. Good lord Boyet, my beauty, though but mean,
Needs not the painted flourish of your praise:
Beauty is bought by judgment of the eye,
Not utter'd by base sale of chapmen's tongues.
I am less proud to hear you tell my worth,
Than you much willing to be counted wise
In spending your wit in the praise of mine.
But now to task the tasker, — Good Boyet,
You are not ignorant, all-telling fame
Doth noise abroad, Navarre hath made a vow,

Till painful study shall out-wear three years,
No woman may approach his silent court:
Therefore to us seem'th it a needful course,
Before we enter his forbidden gates,
To know his pleasure; and in that behalf,
Bold of your worthiness, we single you
As our best-moving fair solicitor:
Tell him, the daughter of the king of France,
On serious business, craving quick despatch,
Importunes personal conference with his grace.
Haste, signify so much; while we attend,
Like humble-visag'd suitors, his high will.

Boy. Proud of employment, willingly I go. [*Exit*

Prin. All pride is willing pride, and yours is so.—
Who are the votaries, my loving lords,
That are vow-fellows with this virtuous duke?

Lord. Longaville is one.

Prin. Know you the man?

Mar. I know him, madam: at a marriage feast,
Between lord Perigort and the beauteous heir
Of Jaques Falconbridge, solemnized
In Normandy, saw I this Longaville:
A man of sovereign parts he is esteem'd;
Well fitted in arts, glorious in arms:
Nothing becomes him ill, that he would well.
The only soil of his fair virtue's gloss,
If virtue's gloss will stain with any soil,
Is a sharp wit match'd with too blunt a will;
Whose edge hath power to cut, whose will still wills
It should none spare that come within his power.

Prin. Some merry mocking lord, belike; is't so?

Mar. They say so most, that most his humours know.

Prin. Such short-liv'd wits do wither as they grow.
Who are the rest?

Kath. The young Dumain, a well-accomplish'd youth,
Of all that virtue love for virtue lov'd:
Most power to do most harm, least knowing ill;
For he hath wit to make an ill shape good,
And shape to win grace though he had no wit.
I saw him at the duke Alençon's once;
And much too little of that good I saw
Is my report to his great worthiness.

Ros. Another of these students at that time
Was there with him: if I have heard a truth,
Biron they call him; but a merrier man,
Within the limit of becoming mirth,
I never spent an hour's talk withal:
His eye begets occasion for his wit;
For every object that the one doth catch,
The other turns to a mirth-moving jest;
Which his fair tongue (conceit's expositor)
Delivers in such apt and gracious words,
That aged ears play truant at his tales,
And younger hearings are quite ravished;
So sweet and voluble is his discourse.

Prin. God bless my ladies! are they all in love,
That every one her own hath garnished
With such bedecking ornaments of praise?

Lord. Here comes Boyet.

Re-enter BOYET.

Prin. Now, what admittance, lord?

Boy. Navarre had notice of your fair approach:
And he and his competitors[1] in oath
Were all address'd to meet you, gentle lady,
Before I came. Marry, thus much I have learnt,

[1] Confederates. See The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act ii sc. 6, note 2.

He rather means to lodge you in the field,
Like one that comes here to besiege his court,
Than seek a dispensation for his oath,
To let you enter his unpeopled house.
Here comes Navarre. [*The Ladies mask.*

Enter KING, LONGAVILLE, DUMAIN, BIRON, *and Attendants.*

King. Fair princess, welcome to the court of Navarre.

Prin. Fair I give you back again; and welcome I have not yet: the roof of this court is too high to be yours, and welcome to the wide fields too base to be mine.

King. You shall be welcome, madam, to my court.

Prin. I will be welcome, then: conduct me thither.

King. Hear me, dear lady; I have sworn an oath.

Prin. Our Lady help my lord! he'll be forsworn.

King. Not for the world, fair madam, by my will.

Prin. Why, will shall break it; will, and nothing else.

King. Your ladyship is ignorant what it is.

Prin. Were my lord so, his ignorance were wise
Where[2] now his knowledge must prove ignorance.
I hear your grace hath sworn-out house-keeping:
'Tis deadly sin to keep that oath, my lord,
And sin to break it.
But pardon me, I am too sudden-bold:
To teach a teacher ill beseemeth me.
Vouchsafe to read the purpose of my coming,
And suddenly resolve me in my suit.
[*Gives a paper.*

King. Madam, I will, if suddenly I may.

[2] *Where* is here used for *whereas*.

Prin. You will the sooner, that I were away;
For you'll prove perjur'd, if you make me stay.
Bir. Did not I dance with you in Brabant once?
Ros. Did not I dance with you in Brabant once?
Bir I know you did.
Ros. How needless was it, then,
To ask the question!
Bir. You must not be so quick.
Ros. 'Tis 'long of you,[3] that spur me with such questions.
Bir. Your wit's too hot, it speeds too fast, 'twill tire.
Ros. Not till it leave the rider in the mire.
Bir. What time o' day?
Ros. The hour that fools should ask.
Bir. Now fair befall your mask!
Ros. Fair fall the face it covers!
Bir. And send you many lovers!
Ros. Amen, so you be none.
Bir. Nay, then will I be gone.
King. Madam, your father here doth intimate
The payment of a hundred thousand crowns;
Being but the one half of an entire sum,
Disbursed by my father in his wars.
But say, that he, or we, (as neither have,)
Receiv'd that sum, yet there remains unpaid
A hundred thousand more; in surety of the which
One part of Aquitain is bound to us,
Although not valued to the money's worth.
If, then, the king your father will restore
But that one half which is unsatisfied,

[3] The phrase, It is along of you, or, It is along on you, means It is your fault. It is owing to you; that is, caused by you. Thus in the Prologue to Returne from Parnassus: "It's all *'long on you*, I could not get my part a night or two before." H.

We will give up our right in Aquitain,
And hold fair friendship with his majesty.
But that, it seems, he little purposeth,
For here he doth demand to have repaid
A hundred thousand crowns; and not demands,
On payment of a hundred thousand crowns,
To have his title live in Aquitain;
Which we much rather had depart[4] withal,
And have the money by our father lent,
Than Aquitain so gelded[5] as it is.
Dear princess, were not his requests so far
From reason's yielding, your fair self should make
A yielding, 'gainst some reason, in my breast,
And go well satisfied to France again.

Prin. You do the king my father too much wrong
And wrong the reputation of your name,
In so unseeming to confess receipt
Of that which hath so faithfully been paid.

King. I do protest, I never heard of it;
And, if you prove it, I'll repay it back,
Or yield up Aquitain.

Prin. We arrest your word:—
Boyet, you can produce acquittances
For such a sum, from special officers
Of Charles his father.

King. Satisfy me so.

Boy. So please your grace, the packet is not come,
Where that and other specialties are bound:
To-morrow you shall have a sight of them.

[4] *To depart* and *to part* were anciently synonymous.

[5] This phrase was a common metaphorical expression then much used. In The Returne from Parnassus, Act iii. sc. 1, we find: "He hath a proper *gelded* parsonage." And Bishop Hall in the second Satire of Book iv.: "Plod it at a patron's tail, to get some *gelded* chapel's cheaper sale." It appears to have been synonymous with *curtailed*.

King. It shall suffice me: at which interview,
All liberal reason I will yield unto.
Meantime, receive such welcome at my hand,
As honour, without breach of honour, may
Make tender of to thy true worthiness.
You may not come, fair princess, in my gates;
But here without you shall be so receiv'd,
As you shall deem yourself lodg'd in my heart,
Though so denied fair harbour in my house.
Your own good thoughts excuse me, and farewell:
To-morrow shall we visit you again.

Prin. Sweet health and fair desires consort your grace!

King. Thy own wish wish I thee in every place. [*Exeunt* KING *and his Train.*

Bir. Lady, I will commend you to my own heart.

Ros. 'Pray you, do my commendations; I would be glad to see it.

Bir. I would you heard it groan.

Ros. Is the fool sick?

Bir. Sick at heart.

Ros. Alack! let it blood.

Bir. Would that do it good?

Ros. My physic says, ay.

Bir. Will you prick't with your eye?

Ros. *No point*,[6] with my knife.

Bir. Now, God save thy life!

Ros. And yours from long living!

Bir. I cannot stay thanksgiving. [*Retiring*

Dum. Sir, I pray you, a word: What lady is that same?

[6] *Point*, in French, is an adverb of negation, but, if properly spoken, is not sounded like the *point* of a knife. A quibble was however intended. Florio in his Dictionary explains *punto* by never a whit; — *no point*, as the Frenchman says."

Boy. The heir of Alençon, Katharine her name.

Dum. A gallant lady! Monsieur, fare you well.

[*Exit*

Lon. I beseech you, a word: What is she in the white?

Boy. A woman sometimes, an you saw her in the light.

Lon. Perchance, light in the light: I desire her name.

Boy. She hath but one for herself; to desire that, were a shame.

Lon. Pray you, sir, whose daughter?

Boy. Her mother's, I have heard.

Lon. God's blessing on your beard!

Boy. Good sir, be not offended:
She is an heir of Falconbridge.

Lon. Nay, my choler is ended.
She is a most sweet lady.

Boy. Not unlike, sir; that may be.

[*Exit* LONGAVILLE.

Bir. What's her name, in the cap?

Boy. Rosaline, by good hap.

Bir. Is she wedded, or no?

Boy. To her will, sir, or so.

Bir. You are welcome, sir: adieu!

Boy. Farewell to me, sir, and welcome to you.

[*Exit* BIRON. — *Ladies unmask.*

Mar. That last is Biron, the merry mad-cap lord:
Not a word with him but a jest.

Boy. And every jest but a word.

Prin. It was well done of you to take him at his word.

Boy. I was as willing to grapple, as he was to board.

Mar. Two hot sheeps, marry!

Boy. And wherefore not ships?
No sheep, sweet lamb, unless we feed on your lips.
Mar. You sheep, and I pasture: Shall that finish the jest?
Boy. So you grant pasture for me.
[*Offering to kiss her.*
Mar. Not so, gentle beast:
My lips are no common, though several[7] they be.
Boy. Belonging to whom?
Mar. To my fortunes and me.
Prin. Good wits will be jangling; but, gentles, agree:
The civil war of wits were much better us'd
On Navarre and his book-men; for here 'tis abus'd.
Boy. If my observation, (which very seldom lies,)
By the heart's still rhetoric, disclosed with eyes,
Deceive me not now, Navarre is infected.
Prin. With what?
Boy. With that which we lovers entitle, affected.
Prin. Your reason?
Boy. Why, all his behaviours did make their retire
To the court of his eye, peeping thorough desire:
His heart, like an agate, with your print impress'd,
Proud with his form, in his eye pride express'd:
His tongue, all impatient to speak and not see,
Did stumble with haste in his eye-sight to be;[8]

[7] A quibble is here intended upon the word *several*, which, besides its ordinary signification of separate, distinct, signified also an enclosed pasture, as opposed to an open field or common. Thus, in Lord Bacon's Apothegms: "There was a lord that was leane of visage, but immediately after his marriage he grew fat. One said to him,—'Your lordship doth contrary to other married men; for they first wax lean, and you wax fat.' Sir Walter Raleigh stood by, and said,—'Why there is no beast, that if you take him from the *common*, and put him into the *several*, but he will wax fat.'"

[8] Although the expression in the text is extremely odd yet the

All senses to that sense did make their repair,
To feel only looking on fairest of fair:
Methought, all his senses were lock'd in his eye,
As jewels in crystal for some prince to buy;
Who, tend'ring their own worth, from where they were glass'd,
Did point you to buy them, along as you pass'd.
His face's own margent [9] did quote such amazes,
That all eyes saw his eyes enchanted with gazes.
I'll give you Aquitain, and all that is his,
An you give him for my sake but one loving kiss

Prin. Come, to our pavilion: Boyet is dispos'd —

Boy. But to speak that in words, which his eye hath disclos'd:
I only have made a mouth of his eye,
By adding a tongue which I know will not lie.

Ros. Thou art an old love-monger, and speak st skilfully.

Mar. He is Cupid's grandfather, and learns news of him.

Ros. Then was Venus like her mother; for her father is but grim.

Boy. Do you hear, my mad wenches?

Mar. No.

Boy. What then, do you see?

Ros. Ay, our way to be gone.

Boy. You are too hard for me

[*Exeunt*

sense appears to be, that his tongue envied the quickness of his eyes, and strove to be as rapid in its utterance as they in their perception.

[9] In Shakespeare's time, notes, quotations, &c., were usually printed in the *margin* of books.

ACT III.

SCENE I. Another part of the same.

Enter ARMADO *and* MOTH.

Arm. Warble, child; make passionate my sense of hearing.

Moth. Concolinel[1] —— [*Singing.*

Arm. Sweet air! — Go, tenderness of years; take this key, give enlargement to the swain, bring him festinately[2] hither: I must employ him in a letter to my love.

Moth. Master, will you win your love with a French brawl?[3]

[1] The songs formerly used on the stage were often popular ditties, and therefore were omitted in the writing of a play. Such is apparently the case here; *Concolinel* being the first word of Moth's "sweet air." The song is probably lost; at least, it has not been identified. H.

[2] That is, *hastily.* So, in Lear: "Advise the Duke where you are going to a most *festinate* preparation."

[3] *Brawl*, from the French *bransle*, is a kind of dance mentioned by several old writers, and thus described by Marston: "The *brawl!* why, 'tis but two singles to the left, two on the right, three doubles forwards, a traverse of six rounds: do this twice, three singles side galliard trick of twenty coranto pace: a figure of eight, three singles broken down, come up, meet two doubles, fall back, and then honour." Ben Jonson gives it a most poetical dash in The Vision of Delight:

> "In curious knots and mazes so,
> The Spring at first was taught to go;
> And Zephyr, when he came to woo
> His Flora, had their motions too:
> And thence did Venus learn to lead
> The Idalian *brawls*, and so to tread
> As if the wind, not she, did walk;
> Nor prest a flower, nor bow'd a stalk."

And Gray thus alludes to Elizabeth's "dancing Chancellor," while describing the ancient seat of the Hattons:

Arm. How meanest thou? brawling in French?

Moth. No, my complete master: but to jig off a tune at the tongue's end, canary[4] to it with your feet, humour it with turning up your eyelids; sigh a note, and sing a note; sometime through the throat, as if you swallowed love with singing love; sometime through the nose, as if you snuff'd up love by smelling love; with your hat penthouse-like o'er the shop of your eyes; with your arms cross'd on your thin belly-doublet, like a rabbit on a spit; or your hands in your pocket, like a man after the old painting; and keep not too long in one tune, but a snip and away: These are complements,[5] these are humours; these betray nice wenches — that would be betrayed without these; and make them men of note (do you note, men?) that most are affected to these.

Arm. How hast thou purchased this experience?

Moth. By my penny of observation.

Arm. But O, — but O, —

Moth. — the hobby-horse is forgot.[6]

> "Full oft, within the spacious walls,
> When he had fifty winters o'er him,
> My grave Lord-keeper led the *brawls;*
> The seals and maces danc'd before him.
> His bushy beard, and shoe-strings green,
> His high-crown'd hat, and satin doublet,
> Mov'd the stout heart of England's Queen,
> Though Pope and Spaniard could not trouble it." H.

[4] *Canary* was the name of a sprightly dance, sometimes accompanied by the castanets.

[5] That is, accomplishments. See Act i. sc. 1, note 12.

[6] The *Hobby-horse* was a personage belonging to the ancient Morris dance, when complete. It was the figure of a horse fastened round the waist of a man, his own legs going through the body of the horse, and enabling him to walk, but concealed by a long footcloth; while false legs appeared where those of the man should be at the sides of the horse. The Puritans waged a furious war against the Morris dance; which caused the Hobby-horse to be often left out: hence the line or burden of the song, which passed into a proverb.

Arm. Callest thou my love hobby-horse?

Moth. No, master; the hobby-horse is but a colt, and your love perhaps a hackney.[7] But have you forgot your love?

Arm. Almost I had.

Moth. Negligent student! learn her by heart.

Arm. By heart, and in heart, boy.

Moth. And out of heart, master: all those three I will prove.

Arm. What wilt thou prove?

Moth. A man, if I live: and this, by, in, and without, upon the instant: By heart you love her, because your heart cannot come by her; in heart you love her, because your heart is in love with her; and out of heart you love her, being out of heart that you cannot enjoy her.

Arm. I am all these three.

Moth. And three times as much more, and yet nothing at all.

Arm. Fetch hither the swain: he must carry me a letter.

Moth. A messager well-sympathiz'd; a horse to be ambassador for an ass!

Arm. Ha, ha! what sayest thou?

Moth. Marry, sir, you must send the ass upon the horse, for he is very slow-gaited: But I go.

Arm. The way is but short: away.

Moth. As swift as lead, sir.

Arm. Thy meaning, pretty ingenious?
Is not lead a metal heavy, dull, and slow?

Moth. *Minime*, honest master; or rather, master, no.

[7] Dr. Johnson says,—"A colt is a hot, mad-brained, unbroken young fellow." *Hackney* seems to have been a cant term for a prostitute, or a stale.

Arm. I say, lead is slow.

Moth. You are too swift, sir, to say so:
Is that lead slow which is fir'd from a gun?

Arm. Sweet smoke of rhetoric!
He reputes me a cannon; and the bullet, that's he:—
I shoot thee at the swain.

Moth. Thump then, and I flee. [*Exit.*

Arm. A most acute juvenal; voluble and free of grace!
By thy favour, sweet welkin, I must sigh in thy face
Most rude melancholy, valour gives thee place.
My herald is return'd.

Re-enter MOTH *with* COSTARD.

Moth. A wonder, master! here's a Costard[8] broken in a shin.

Arm. Some enigma, some riddle:—come,—thy *l'envoy*;[9]—begin.

Cost. No egma, no riddle, no *l'envoy:* no salve in the mail,[10] sir: O! sir, plantain, a plain plantain; no *l'envoy*, no *l'envoy;* no salve, sir, but a plantain!

Arm. By virtue, thou enforcest laughter; thy silly thought, my spleen; the heaving of my lungs provokes me to ridiculous smiling: O, pardon me, my stars! Doth the inconsiderate take salve for *l'envoy* and the word *l'envoy* for a salve?

[8] That is, a head; a name adopted from an apple shaped like a man's head: hence the "wonder" of the thing.

[9] An old French term for concluding verses, which served either to convey the moral, or to address the poem to some person.

[10] A *mail* or *male* was a budget, wallet, or portmanteau. Costard, mistaking *enigma, riddle,* and *l'envoy* for names of salves, objects to the application of any *salve* in the budget, and cries out for a *plantain* leaf. There is a quibble upon *salve* and *salvé*, a word with which it was not unusual to conclude epistles, and which therefore was a kind of *l'envoy*. Tyrwhitt aptly proposed to read, —"No salve in *them all*, sir:" but as the meaning is the same either way, perhaps it is best not to admit the change.

Moth. Do the wise think them other? is not *l'envoy* a salve?

Arm. No, page; it is an epilogue or discourse to make plain
Some obscure precedence that hath tofore been sain
I will example it:
The fox, the ape, and the humble-bee,
Were still at odds, being but three.
There's the moral: Now the *l'envoy.*

Moth. I will add the *l'envoy.* Say the moral again.

Arm. The fox, the ape, and the humble-bee,
Were still at odds, being but three:

Moth. Until the goose came out of door,
And stay'd the odds by making four.
Now will I begin your moral, and do you follow with my *l'envoy.*
The fox, the ape, and the humble-bee,
Were still at odds, being but three:

Arm. Until the goose came out of door,
Staying the odds by making four.

Moth. A good *l'envoy*, ending in the goose.
Would you desire more?

Cost. The boy hath sold him a bargain,[11] a goose, that's flat:—
Sir your pennyworth is good, an your goose be fat.—
To sell a bargain well, is as cunning as fast and loose:
Let me see, a fat *l'envoy;* ay, that's a fat goose.

Arm. Come hither, come hither: How did this argument begin?

Moth. By saying that a Costard was broken in a shin.
Then call'd you for the *l'envoy.*

[11] That is, hath made a fool of him; or, as we should say, has come it over him. S.

Cost. True, and I for a plantain: Thus came your argument in;
Then the boy's fat *l'envoy*, the goose that you bought; And he ended the market.[12]

Arm. But tell me; how was there a Costard broken in a shin?

Moth. I will tell you sensibly.

Cost. Thou hast no feeling of it, Moth: I will speak that *l'envoy:*

I, Costard, running out, that was safely within,
Fell over the threshold, and broke my shin.

Arm. We will talk no more of this matter.

Cost. Till there be more matter in the shin.

Arm. Sirrah Costard, I will enfranchise thee.

Cost. O! marry me to one Frances?—I smell some *l'envoy*, some goose, in this.

Arm. By my sweet soul, I mean, setting thee at liberty, enfreedoming thy person; thou wert immured, restrained, captivated, bound.

Cost. True, true; and now you will be my purgation, and let me loose.

Arm. I give thee thy liberty, free thee from durance; and, in lieu thereof, impose on thee nothing but this: Bear this significant to the country maid Jaquenetta: there is remuneration; [*Giving him money.*] for the best ward of mine honour is rewarding my dependents. Moth, follow. [*Exit.*

Moth. Like the sequel, I.—Signior Costard, adieu.

Cost. My sweet ounce of man's flesh! my incony[13] Jew!— [*Exit* MOTH.

[12] Alluding to the proverb, "Three women and a *goose* make a *market*."

[13] The meaning and etymology of this word are not clearly defined, though numerous instances of its use are adduced. *Sweet, pretty, delicate* seem to be some of its acceptations; and the best derivation seems to be from the northern word *canny* or *conny*, meaning *pretty;* the *in* being intensive and equivalent to *very*.

Now will I look to his remuneration. Remuneration! O! that's the Latin word for three farthings: three farthings — remuneration. — "What's the price of this inkle?[14] a penny: — No, I'll give you a remuneration:" why, it carries it. — Remuneration! — why, it is a fairer name than French crown. I will never buy and sell out of this word.

Enter BIRON.

Bir. O, my good knave Costard! exceedingly well met.

Cost. Pray you, sir, how much carnation ribbon may a man buy for a remuneration?

Bir. What is a remuneration?

Cost. Marry, sir, half-penny farthing.

Bir. O! why then, three-farthings-worth of silk.

Cost. I thank your worship: God be wi' you!

Bir. O, stay, slave! I must employ thee:
As thou wilt win my favour, good my knave,
Do one thing for me that I shall entreat.

Cost. When would you have it done, sir?

Bir. O! this afternoon.

Cost. Well, I will do it, sir: Fare you well.

Bir. O! thou knowest not what it is.

Cost. I shall know, sir, when I have done it.

Bir. Why, villain, thou must know first.

Cost. I will come to your worship to-morrow morning.

Bir. It must be done this afternoon. Hark slave, it is but this: —
The princess comes to hunt here in the park,
And in her train there is a gentle lady;
When tongues speak sweetly, then they name her name,

[14] *Inkle* was a species of tape.

And Rosaline they call her: ask for her:
And to her white hand see thou do commend
This seal'd-up counsel. There's thy guerdon; go
[*Gives him money*

Cost. Guerdon.[15]—O, sweet guerdon! better than remuneration; eleven-pence farthing better: Most sweet guerdon!—I will do it, sir, in print.[16]—Guerdon—remuneration. [*Exit.*

Bir. O!—And I, forsooth, in love! I, that have been love's whip;
A very beadle to a humorous sigh;
A critic; nay, a night-watch constable;
A domineering pedant o'er the boy,
Than whom no mortal so magnificent!
This wimpled,[17] whining, purblind, wayward boy;
This senior-junior, giant-dwarf, Dan Cupid;
Regent of love-rhymes, lord of folded arms,
The anointed sovereign of sighs and groans,
Liege of all loiterers and malcontents,
Dread prince of plackets,[18] king of cod-pieces,
Sole imperator, and great general
Of trotting paritors,[19]—O my little heart!—
And I to be a corporal of his field,
And wear his colours like a tumbler's hoop![20]
What! I love! I sue! I seek a wife!
A woman, that is like a German clock,[21]

[15] *Guerdon* is reward; from the French.

[16] With the utmost nicety.

[17] To *wimple* is to *veil*. Shakespeare means no more than that Cupid was *hood-winked*.

[18] *Plackets* were *stomachers*.

[19] The officers of the spiritual courts who serve citations.

[20] It was once a mark of gallantry to wear a lady's colours It appears that a tumbler's hoop was usually dressed out with coloured ribands.

[21] Clocks, which were usually imported from Germany at this time, were intricate and clumsy pieces of mechanism, soon deranged, and frequently "out of frame." Ben Jonson. in The

Still a repairing; ever out of frame;
And never going aright; being a watch,
But being watch'd that it may still go right!
Nay, to be perjur'd, which is worst of all;
And, among three, to love the worst of all;
A witty wanton with a velvet brow,
With two pitch balls stuck in her face for eyes;
Ay, and, by Heaven, one that will do the deed,
Though Argus were her eunuch and her guard:
And I to sigh for her! to watch for her!
To pray for her! Go to; it is a plague
That Cupid will impose for my neglect
Of his almighty dreadful little might.
Well, I will love, write, sigh, pray, sue, groan.
Some men must love my lady, and some Joan.

[*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. Another part of the same.

Enter the PRINCESS, ROSALINE, MARIA, KATHARINE, BOYET, *Lords*, *Attendants*, *and a Forester.*

Prin. Was that the king, that spurred his horse so hard
Against the steep uprising of the hill?

Boy. I know not; but I think it was not he.

Prin. Whoe'er a' was, a' show'd a mounting mind

Silent Woman, Act. iv. se. 1, thus describes a fashionable lady: "She takes herself asunder still when she goes to bed, into some twenty boxes; and about next day noon is put together again, like a great *German clock*."

Well, lords, to-day we shall have our despatch;
On Saturday we will return to France. —
Then, forester, my friend, where is the bush,
That we must stand and play the murderer in?

For. Hereby, upon the edge of yonder coppice
A stand, where you may make the fairest shoot.

Prin. I thank my beauty, I am fair that shoot,
And thereupon thou speak'st, the fairest shoot.

For. Pardon me, madam, for I meant not so.

Prin. What, what! first praise me, and again say no?
O short-liv'd pride! Not fair? Alack for woe!

For. Yes, madam, fair.

Prin. Nay, never paint me now:
Where fair is not, praise cannot mend the brow.
Here, good my glass, take this for telling true:
[*Giving him money.*
Fair payment for foul words is more than due.

For. Nothing but fair is that which you inherit.

Prin. See, see! my beauty will be sav'd by merit.
O heresy in fair, fit for these days!
A giving hand, though foul, shall have fair praise.—
But come, the bow: — Now mercy goes to kill,
And shooting well is then accounted ill.
Thus will I save my credit in the shoot:
Not wounding, pity would not let me do't;
If wounding, then it was to show my skill,
That more for praise than purpose meant to kill.
And, out of question, so it is sometimes;
Glory grows guilty of detested crimes;
When, for fame's sake, for praise, an outward part,
We bend to that the working of the heart:
As I, for praise alone, now seek to spill
The poor deer's blood, that my heart means no ill

Boy Do not curst wives hold that self-sovereignty

Only for praise' sake, when they strive to be
Lords o'er their lords?

Prin. Only for praise; and praise we may afford
To any lady that subdues a lord.

Enter COSTARD.

Here comes a member of the commonwealth.[1]

Cost. God dig-you-den[2] all! Pray you, which is the head lady?

Prin. Thou shalt know her, fellow, by the rest that have no heads.

Cost. Which is the greatest lady, the highest?

Prin. The thickest, and the tallest.

Cost. The thickest, and the tallest! it is so; truth is truth.

An your waist, mistress, were as slender as my wit,
One o' these maids' girdles for your waist should be fit.
Are not you the chief woman? you are the thickest here.

Prin. What's your will, sir? what's your will?

Cost. I have a letter from monsieur Biron, to one lady Rosaline.

Prin. O, thy letter, thy letter! he's a good friend of mine:
Stand aside, good bearer. — Boyet, you can carve;
Break up this capon.[3]

Boy. I am bound to serve. —

[1] The Princess calls Costard *a member of the commonwealth*, because he is one of the attendants on the king and his associates in their new-modelled society.

[2] A corruption of God give you good even.

[3] That is, open this letter. The Poet uses this metaphor as the French do their *poulet*; which signifies both a young fowl and a love-letter To *break up* was a phrase for to *carve*.

This letter is mistook; it importeth none here:
It is writ to Jaquenetta.

Prin. We will read it, I swear
Break the neck of the wax, and every one give ear

Boy. [*Reads.*] "By Heaven, that thou art fair, is most infallible; true, that thou art beauteous; truth itself, that thou art lovely. More fairer than fair, beautiful than beauteous, truer than truth itself, have commiseration on thy heroical vassal! The magnanimous and most illustrate king Cophetua[4] set eye upon the pernicious and indubitate beggar Penelophon; and he it was that might rightly say, *veni, vidi, vici;* which to annotanize in the vulgar, (O base and obscure vulgar!) *videlicet*, he came, saw, and overcame: he came, one; saw, two; overcame, three. Who came? the king: Why did he come? to see: Why did he see? to overcome. To whom came he? to the beggar: What saw he? the beggar: Whom overcame he? the beggar. The conclusion is victory: On whose side? the king's: The captive is enrich'd: On whose side? the beggar's The catastrophe is a nuptial: On whose side? the king's? —no, on both in one, or one in both. I am the king; for so stands the comparison: thou the beggar; for so witnesseth thy lowliness. Shall I command thy love? I may: Shall I enforce thy love? I could: Shall I entreat thy love? I will. What shalt thou exchange for rags? robes: For tittles? titles: For thyself? me. Thus, expecting thy reply, I profane my lips on thy foot, my eyes on thy picture, and my heart on thy every part.

Thine, in the dearest design of industry,
DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO."

"Thus dost thou hear the Nemean lion roar
'Gainst thee, thou lamb, that standest as his prey;
Submissive fall his princely feet before,
And he from forage will incline to play:
But if thou strive, poor soul, what art thou then?
Food for his rage, repasture for his den."

[4] See Act i. sc. 2, note 7

Prin. What plume of feathers is he that indited this letter?
What vane? what weathercock? did you ever hear better?

Boy. I am much deceiv'd, but I remember the style.

Prin. Else your memory is bad, going o'er it erewhile.[5]

Boy. This Armado is a Spaniard, that keeps here in court;
A phantasm, a Monarcho,[6] and one that makes sport
To the prince, and his book-mates.

Prin. Thou, fellow, a word:
Who gave thee this letter?

Cost. I told you; my lord.

Prin. To whom shouldst thou give it?

Cost. From my lord to my lady.

Prin. From which lord, to which lady?

Cost. From my lord Biron, a good master of mine,
To a lady of France, that he call'd Rosaline.

Prin. Thou hast mistaken his letter. Come, lords, away.
Here, sweet, put up this: 'twill be thine another day. [*Exeunt* PRINCESS *and Train.*

Boy. Who is the suitor? who is the suitor?[7]

Ros. Shall I teach you to know?

[5] That is, lately. A pun is intended upon the word *stile*.

[6] The allusion is to a fantastical character of the time. Thus Meres, in his *Palladis Tamia*, 1598: "Popular applause doth nourish some, neither do they gape after any other thing but vaine praise and glorie,—as in our age Peter Shakerlye of Paules, and *Monarcho* that lived about the court." He is called an *Italian* by Nashe, and Churchyard has written some lines which he calls his Epitaphe. By another writer it appears that he was a Bergamasco.

[7] An equivoque was here intended; it should appear that the words *shooter* and *suitor* were pronounced alike in Shakespeare's time.

Boy. Ay, my continent of beauty.

Ros. Why, she that bears the bow. Finely put off!

Boy. My lady goes to kill horns; but, if thou marry,
Hang me by the neck, if horns that year miscarry
Finely put on!

Ros. Well, then, I am the shooter.

Boy. And who is your deer?

Ros. If we choose by the horns, yourself: come near.
Finely put on, indeed!

Mar. You still wrangle with her, Boyet, and she strikes at the brow.

Boy. But she herself is hit lower: Have I hit her now?

Ros. Shall I come upon thee with an old saying, that was a man when king Pepin of France was a little boy, as touching the hit it?

Boy. So I may answer thee with one as old, that was a woman when queen Guinever of Britain was a little wench, as touching the hit it.

Ros. Thou canst not hit it, hit it, hit it, [*Singing.*
Thou canst not hit it, my good man.

Boy. An I cannot, cannot, cannot,
An I cannot, another can.

[*Exeunt* Ros. *and* Kath.

Cost. By my troth, most pleasant! how both did fit it!

Mar. A mark marvellous well shot; for they both did hit it.

Boy. A mark! O, mark but that mark! A mark says my lady.
Let the mark have a prick in't, to mete at, if it may be.

Mar. Wide o' the bow hand![8] I'faith your hand is out.

Cost. Indeed, a' must shoot nearer, or he'll ne'er hit the clout.

Boy. An if my hand be out, then belike your hand is in.

Cost. Then will she get the upshot by cleaving the pin.

Mar. Come, come, you talk greasily; your lips grow foul.

Cost. She's too hard for you at pricks, sir: challenge her to bowl.

Boy. I fear too much rubbing: Good night, my good owl. [*Exeunt* BOYET *and* MARIA.

Cost. By my soul, a swain! a most simple clown!
Lord, Lord! how the ladies and I have put him down!
O' my troth, most sweet jests! most incony vulgar wit!
When it comes so smoothly off, so obscenely, as it were, so fit.
Armatho o' the one side, — O, a most dainty man!
To see him walk before a lady, and to bear her fan!
To see him kiss his hand! and how most sweetly a' will swear! —
And his page o' t' other side, that handful of wit!
Ah, heavens, it is a most pathetical nit!
Sola, sola! [*Shouting within.* *Exit* COST.

[8] This is a term in archery still in use, signifying "a good deal to the left of the mark." Of the other expressions, the *clout* was the white mark at which the archers took aim. The *pin* was the wooden nail in the centre of it.

SCENE II. The same.

Enter HOLOFERNES, *Sir* NATHANIEL, *and* DULL.

Nath. Very reverent sport, truly; and done in the testimony of a good conscience.

Hol. The deer was, as you know, *sanguis*, — in blood; ripe as the pomewater,[1] who now hangeth like a jewel in the ear of *cœlo*, — the sky, the welkin, the heaven; and anon falleth like a crab, on the face of *terra*, — the soil, the land, the earth.

Nath. Truly, master Holofernes, the epithets are sweetly varied, like a scholar at the least: But, sir, I assure ye, it was a buck of the first head.[2]

Hol. Sir Nathaniel, *haud credo.*

Dull. 'Twas not a *haud credo*, 'twas a pricket.

Hol. Most barbarous intimation! yet a kind of insinuation, as it were, *in via*, in way of explication; *facere*, as it were, replication, or, rather, *ostentare*, to show, as it were, his inclination, — after his undressed, unpolished, uneducated, unpruned, untrained, or, rather, unlettered, or, ratherest, unconfirmed fashion, — to insert again my *haud credo* for a deer.

Dull. I said, the deer was not a *haud credo*; 'twas a pricket.

[1] A species of apple.

[2] In The Return from Parnassus, 1606, is the following account of the appellations of deer at their different ages: "Now, sir, a buck is, the first year, a fawn; the second year, a pricket; the third year, a sorrel; the fourth year, a soare; the fifth, a buck of the first head; the sixth year, a complete buck. Likewise, your hart is, the first year, a calfe; the second year, a brocket; the third year, a spade; the fourth year, a stag; the sixth year, a hart. A roe-buck is, the first year, a kid; the second year, a gird; the third year, a nemuse; and these are your special beasts for chase."

Hol. Twice sod simplicity, *bis coctus!* — O, thou monster, ignorance, how deformed dost thou look!

Nath. Sir, he hath never fed of the dainties that are bred in a book; he hath not eat paper, as it were; he hath not drunk ink: his intellect is not replenished; he is only an animal, only sensible in the duller parts;

And such barren plants are set before us, that we thankful should be
(Which we of taste and feeling are) for those parts that do fructify in us more than he;
For as it would ill become me to be vain, indiscreet, or a fool,
So, were there a patch set on learning, to see him in a school:
But, *omne bene*, say I; being of an old father's mind,
Many can brook the weather that love not the wind.

Dull. You two are book-men: Can you tell by your wit,
What was a month old at Cain's birth, that's not five weeks old as yet?

Hol. Dictynna,[3] good man Dull; Dictynna, good man Dull.

Dull. What is Dictynna?

Nath. A title to Phœbe, to Luna, to the moon.

Hol. The moon was a month old, when Adam was no more;
And raught[4] not to five weeks, when he came to fivescore.
The allusion holds in the exchange.[5]

[3] Shakespeare might have found this uncommon title of Diana in the second book of Golding's translation of Ovid's Metamorphoses

[4] Reached.

[5] That is, the riddle is as good when I use the name of Adam as when I use the name of Cain.

Dull. 'Tis true indeed: the collusion holds in the exchange.

Hol. God comfort thy capacity! I say, the allusion holds in the exchange.

Dull. And I say the pollusion holds in the exchange; for the moon is never but a month old: and I say, beside, that 'twas a pricket that the princess kill'd.

Hol. Sir Nathaniel, will you hear an extemporal epitaph on the death of the deer? and, to humour the ignorant, I have call'd the deer the princess kill'd, a pricket.

Nath. *Perge*, good master Holofernes, *perge;* so it shall please you to abrogate scurrility.

Hol. I will something affect the letter;[6] for it argues facility.

The preyful princess pierc'd and prick'd a pretty pleasing pricket;
Some say, a sore; but not a sore, till now made sore with shooting.
The dogs did yell; put l to sore, then sorel jumps from thicket;
Or pricket, sore, or else sorel; the people fall a-hooting.
If sore be sore, then L to sore makes fifty sores; O sore L
Of one sore I a hundred make, by adding but one more L.

Nath. A rare talent!

Dull. If a talent be a claw, look how he claws him with a talent.[7]

Hol. This is a gift that I have, simple, simple; a foolish extravagant spirit, full of forms, figures, shapes, objects, ideas, apprehensions, motions, revolutions: these are begot in the ventricle of memory,

[6] That is, I will use or practise alliteration.

[7] *Talon* was often written *talent* in Shakespeare's time. Honest Dull quibbles. One of the senses of to *claw* is to *flatter*. See Much Ado about Nothing, Act i. sc. 3, note 3.

nourish'd in the womb of *pia mater*, and deliver'd upon the mellowing of occasion: But the gift is good in those in whom it is acute, and I am thankful for it.

Nath. Sir, I praise the Lord for you, and so may my parishioners; for their sons are well tutor'd by you, and their daughters profit very greatly under you: you are a good member of the commonwealth.

Hol. Mehercle! if their sons be ingenious, they shall want no instruction: if their daughters be capable, I will put it to them: But, *vir sapit, qui pauca loquitur.* A soul feminine saluteth us.

Enter JAQUENETTA *and* COSTARD.

Jaq. God give you good morrow, master person.

Hol. Master person, — *quasi* pers-on. An if one should be pierc'd, which is the one?

Cost. Marry, master schoolmaster, he that is likest to a hogshead.

Hol. Of piercing a hogshead! a good lustre of conceit in a turf of earth; fire enough for a flint pearl enough for a swine: 'tis pretty; it is well.

Jaq. Good master parson, be so good as read me this letter; it was given me by Costard, and sent me from Don Armatho: I beseech you, read it.

Hol. Fauste, precor gelidâ quando pecus omne sub umbrâ
Ruminat, — and so forth. Ah, good old Mantuan![8] I may speak of thee as the traveller doth of Venice

[8] The Eclogues of Mantuanus were translated before the time of Shakespeare, and the Latin printed on the opposite side of the page for the use of schools. In 1567 they were also versified by Turberville. The first Eclogue of Mantuanus begins *Fauste precor gelida*, &c.

——*Vinegia, Vinegia,*
Chi non te vede, ei non te pregia.[9]

Old Mantuan! old Mantuan! Who understandeth thee not, loves thee not. — *Ut, re, sol, la, mi, fa.*[10] —Under pardon, sir, what are the contents? or, rather, as Horace says in his — What, my soul, verses?

Nath. Ay, sir, and very learned.

Hol. Let me hear a staff, a stanza, a verse: *Lege, domine.*

Nath. [*Reads.*] "If love make me forsworn, how shall I swear to love?
Ah, never faith could hold, if not to beauty vow'd!
Though to myself forsworn, to thee I'll faithful prove;
Those thoughts to me were oaks, to thee like osiers bow'd.
Study his bias leaves, and makes his book thine eyes;
Where all those pleasures live that art would comprehend:
If knowledge be the mark, to know thee shall suffice:
Well learned is that tongue, that well can thee commend;
All ignorant that soul, that sees thee without wonder;
Which is to me some praise, that I thy parts admire:
Thy eye Jove's lightning bears, thy voice his dreadful thunder,
Which, not to anger bent, is music and sweet fire.
Celestial, as thou art, O! pardon, love, this wrong,
That sings heaven's praise with such an earthly tongue!"[11]

Hol. You find not the apostrophes, and so miss the accent: let me supervise the canzonet. Here are only numbers ratified; but, for the elegancy facility, and golden cadence of poesy, *caret.* Ovid

[9] This proverb occurs in Florio's Second Frutes, 1591, where i stands thus:

"Venetia, chi non ti vede non ti pretia
Ma chi ti vede, ben gli costa."

[10] He hums the notes of the gamut as Edmund does in King Lear. Act i. sc. 2.

[11] These verses are printed, with some variations, in The Passionate Pilgrim, 1599.

ius Naso was the man; and why, indeed, Naso, but for smelling out the odoriferous flowers of fancy, the jerks of invention? *Imitari*, is nothing: so doth the hound his master, the ape his keeper, the 'tired horse [12] his rider. But, damosella virgin, was this directed to you?

Jaq. Ay, sir, from one Monsieur Biron,[13] one of the strange queen's lords.

Hol. I will overglance the superscript. "To the snow-white hand of the most beauteous lady Rosaline." I will look again on the intellect of the letter, for the nomination of the party writing to the person written unto:

"Your ladyship's in all desired employment, BIRON."

Sir Nathaniel, this Biron is one of the votaries with the king; and here he hath framed a letter to a sequent of the stranger queen's, which, accidentally, or by the way of progression, hath miscarried. — Trip and go, my sweet; deliver this paper into the royal hand of the king; it may concern much: Stay not thy compliment; I forgive thy duty; adieu

Jaq. Good Costard, go with me. — Sir, God save your life!

Cost. Have with thee, my girl.

[*Exeunt* COST. *and* JAQ.

Nath. Sir, you have done this in the fear of God, very religiously; and, as a certain father saith, —

Hol. Sir, tell not me of the father; I do fear colourable colours.[14] But to return to the verses: Did they please you, Sir Nathaniel?

[12] That is, the horse adorned with ribands; Bankes' horse is here probably alluded to.

[13] Shakespeare forgot that Jaquenetta knew nothing of Biron, and had said just before that the letter had been "sent to her from Don *Armatho*, and given to her by Costard."

[14] That is, specious or fair-seeming appearances.

Nath. Marvellous well for the pen.

Hol. I do dine to-day at the father's of a certain pupil of mine; where if, before repast, it shall please you to gratify the table with a grace, I will, on my privilege I have with the parents of the foresaid child or pupil, undertake your *ben venuto;* where I will prove those verses to be very unlearned, neither savouring of poetry, wit, nor invention: I beseech your society.

Nath. And thank you too; for society, saith the text, is the happiness of life.

Hol. And, certes, the text most infallibly concludes it.—[*To* DULL.] Sir, I do invite you too; you shall not say me nay: *pauca verba.* Away! the gentles are at their game, and we will to our recreation. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. Another part of the same.

Enter BIRON, *with a paper.*

Bir. The king he is hunting the deer; I am coursing myself: they have pitch'd a toil; I am toiling in a pitch—pitch that defiles: Defile! a foul word. Well, set thee down, sorrow! for so, they say, the fool said, and so say I, and ay the fool. Well proved, wit! by the Lord, this love is as mad as Ajax: it kills sheep; it kills me, I a sheep Well proved again o' my side! I will not love: if I do, hang me; i'faith, I will not. O! but her eye,—by this light, but for her eye, I would not love her; yes, for her two eyes. Well, I do nothing in the world but lie, and lie in my throat. By Heaven I do love; and it hath taught me to rhyme, and to be melancholy; and here is part of my rhyme, and here my melancholy. Well, she hath one o' my

sonnets already; the clown bore it, the fool sent it, and the lady hath it: sweet clown, sweeter fool, sweetest lady! By the world, I would not care a pin if the other three were in. Here comes one with a paper: God give him grace to groan! [*Gets up into a tree.*

Enter the KING, *with a paper.*

King. Ah me!

Bir. [*Aside.*] Shot, by Heaven! — Proceed, sweet Cupid; thou hast thump'd him with thy bird-bolt under the left pap: — I'faith, secrets. —

King. [*Reads.*] "So sweet a kiss the golden sun gives not
To those fresh morning drops upon the rose,
As thy eye-beams, when their fresh rays have smote
The night of dew that on my cheeks down flows:
Nor shines the silver moon one half so bright
Through the transparent bosom of the deep,
As doth thy face through tears of mine give light:
Thou shin'st in every tear that I do weep:
No drop but as a coach doth carry thee;
So ridest thou triumphing in my woe.
Do but behold the tears that swell in me,
And they thy glory through my grief will show
But do not love thyself; then thou wilt keep
My tears for glasses, and still make me weep.
O queen of queens, how far dost thou excel!
No thought can think, nor tongue of mortal tell." —

How shall she know my griefs? I'll drop the paper:
Sweet leaves, shade folly. Who is he comes here?
[*Steps aside.*

Enter LONGAVILLE, *with a paper.*

[*Aside.*] What, Longaville! and reading? listen, ear.

Bir. [*Aside.*] Now, in thy likeness, one more fool, appear!

Lon. Ah me! I am forsworn.

Bir. [*Aside.*] Why, he comes in like a perjurer, wearing papers.

King. [*Aside.*] In love, I hope: Sweet fellowship in shame!

Bir. [*Aside.*] One drunkard loves another of the name.

Lon. Am I the first that have been perjur'd so?

Bir. [*Aside.*] I could put thee in comfort: not by two, that I know.

Thou mak'st the triumviry, the corner-cap of society,
The shape of love's Tyburn [2] that hangs up simplicity.

Lon. I fear these stubborn lines lack power to move:
O sweet Maria, empress of my love!
These numbers will I tear, and write in prose.

Bir. [*Aside.*] O! rhymes are guards on wanton Cupid's hose:
Disfigure not his slop.[3]

Lon. This same shall go. —

[*Reads.*] "Did not the heavenly rhetoric of thine eye,
'Gainst whom the world cannot hold argument,
Persuade my heart to this false perjury?
Vows for thee broke deserve not punishment.
A woman I forswore; but I will prove,
Thou being a goddess, I forswore not thee:
My vow was earthly, thou a heavenly love;
Thy grace being gain'd, cures all disgrace in me.
Vows are but breath, and breath a vapour is:

[1] The ancient punishment of a perjured person was to wear on the breast a paper expressing the crime.

[2] By *triumviry* and the *shape of love's Tyburn*, Shakespeare alludes to the gallows of the time, which was occasionally *triangular*.

[3] *Slops* were wide-kneed breeches, the garb in fashion in Shakespeare's time. — *Guards* are facings, trimmings.

Then thou, fair sun, which on my earth dost shine.
Exhal'st this vapour vow; in thee it is:
If broken, then, it is no fault of mine:
If by me broke, what fool is not so wise,
To lose an oath to win a paradise?"

Bir. [*Aside.*] This is the liver vein,[4] which makes flesh a deity;
A green goose, a goddess: pure, pure idolatry.
God amend us, God amend! we are much out o' the way.

Enter DUMAIN, *with a paper.*

Lon. By whom shall I send this? — Company! stay. [*Stepping aside.*

Bir. [*Aside.*] All hid, all hid, an old infant play:
Like a demi-god here sit I in the sky,
And wretched fools' secrets heedfully o'er-eye.
More sacks to the mill![5] O heavens! I have my wish;
Dumain transform'd: four woodcocks[6] in a dish!

Dum. O most divine Kate!

Bir. [*Aside.*] O most profane coxcomb!

Dum. By Heaven, the wonder of a mortal eye!

Bir. [*Aside.*] By earth, she is not; corporal, there you lie.[7]

[4] The *liver* was anciently supposed to be the seat of love. So, in Much Ado about Nothing: "If ever *love* had interest in his *liver*."

[5] Mr. Collier says this is a well-known game still played among boys. A passage in Gayton's Pleasant Notes upon Don Quixote gives it another meaning more apt to the occasion: "Who were oppressed and overladen with heavy packs, and ought not to have laid more sacks to the mill." *All hid*, three lines above, of course is the child's play, *hide and seek*. H.

[6] A *woodcock* means a foolish fellow; that bird being supposed to have *no brains*.

[7] That is, you lie in calling her "the wonder of a mortal eye She is *corporeal*. H

Dum. Her amber hairs for foul have amber quoted.[8]

Bir. [*Aside.*] An amber-colour'd raven was well noted.

Dum. As upright as the cedar.

Bir. [*Aside.*] Stoop, I say;
Her shoulder is with child.

Dum. As fair as day.

Bir. [*Aside.*] Ay, as some days; but then no sun must shine.

Dum. O, that I had my wish!

Lon. [*Aside.*] And I had mine!

King. [*Aside.*] And I mine too, good Lord!

Bir. [*Aside.*] Amen, so I had mine: Is not that a good word?

Dum. I would forget her; but a fever she
Reigns in my blood, and will remember'd be.

Bir. [*Aside.*] A fever in your blood? why, then incision
Would let her out in saucers: Sweet misprision!

Dum. Once more I'll read the ode that I have writ.

Bir. [*Aside.*] Once more I'll mark how love can vary wit.

Dum. On a day, alack the day!
Love, whose month is ever May,
Spied a blossom, passing fair,
Playing in the wanton air:
Through the velvet leaves the wind,
All unseen, 'gan passage find;
That the lover, sick to death,
Wish'd himself the heaven's breath.

[8] *Quoted* signifies *marked* or *noted*. The construction of this passage will therefore be: "Her amber hairs have marked or shown that real amber is foul in comparison with themselves."

Air, quoth he, thy cheeks may blow,
Air, would I might triumph so!
But, alack! my hand is sworn
Ne'er to pluck thee from thy thorn.
Vow, alack! for youth unmeet;
Youth so apt to pluck a sweet.
Do not call it sin in me,
That I am forsworn for thee, —
Thee, for whom Jove would swear
Juno but an Ethiope were;
And deny himself for Jove,
Turning mortal for thy love.[9]

This will I send; and something else more plain,
That shall express my true love's fasting pain.
O, would the King, Biron, and Longaville,
Were lovers too! Ill, to example ill,
Would from my forehead wipe a perjur'd note;
For none offend, where all alike do dote.

Lon. [*Advancing.*] Dumain, thy love is far from charity,
That in love's grief desir'st society:
You may look pale, but I should blush, I know,
To be o'erheard, and taken napping so.

King. [*Advancing.*] Come, sir, you blush; as his your case is such;
You chide at him, offending twice as much:
You do not love Maria; Longaville
Did never sonnet for her sake compile;
Nor never lay his wreathed arms athwart
His loving bosom, to keep down his heart.
I have been closely shrouded in this bush,
And mark'd you both, and for you both did blush

[9] This sonnet is printed in England's Helicon, 1600, and in Jaggard's Collection, 1599, omitting the couplet,

"Do not call it sin in me
That I am forsworn for thee."

I heard your guilty rhymes, observ'd your fashion;
Saw sighs reek from you, noted well your passion
Ah me! says one; O Jove! the other cries;
One, her hairs were gold, crystal the other's eyes:
[*To* LONG.] You would for paradise break faith and troth;
[*To* DUM.] And Jove for your love would infringe an oath.
What will Biron say, when that he shall hear
Faith infringed, which such zeal did swear?
How will he scorn! how will he spend his wit!
How will he triumph, leap, and laugh at it!
For all the wealth that ever I did see,
I would not have him know so much by me.

Bir. [*Descending from the tree.*] Now step I forth to whip hypocrisy. —
Ah, good my liege, I pray thee pardon me:
Good heart! what grace hast thou, thus to reprove
These worms for loving, that art most in love?
Your eyes do make no coaches;[10] in your tears,
There is no certain princess that appears:
You'll not be perjur'd, 'tis a hateful thing:
Tush! none but minstrels like of sonneting.
But are you not asham'd? nay, are you not,
All three of you, to be thus much o'ershot?
You found his mote; the king your mote did see
But I a beam do find in each of three.
O! what a scene of foolery I have seen,
Of sighs, of groans, of sorrow, and of teen!
O me! with what strict patience have I sat,
To see a king transformed to a gnat!
To see great Hercules whipping a gig,[11]
And profound Solomon to tune a jig,

[10] Alluding to a passage in the King's Sonnet
"No drop but as a *coach* doth carry thee."

[1] A *gig* was a kind of top.

And Nestor play at push-pin with the boys,
And critic Timon laugh at idle toys!
Where lies thy grief? O! tell me, good Dumain;
And, gentle Longaville, where lies thy pain?
And where my liege's? all about the breast:—
A caudle, ho!

King. Too bitter is thy jest.
Are we betray'd thus to thy over-view?

Bir. Not you by me, but I betray'd to you,
I, that am honest; I, that hold it sin
To break the vow I am engaged in;
I am betray'd, by keeping company
With men, like men of strange inconstancy.
When shall you see me write a thing in rhyme?
Or groan for love? or spend a minute's time
In pruning[12] me? When shall you hear that I
Will praise a hand, a foot, a face, an eye,
A gait, a state, a brow, a breast, a waist,
A leg, a limb?—

King. Soft! Whither away so fast?
A true man, or a thief, that gallops so?

Bir. I post from love; good lover, let me go

Enter JAQUENETTA *and* COSTARD.

Jaq. God bless the king!

King. What present hast thou there?

Cost. Some certain treason.

King. What makes treason here?[13]

Cost. Nay, it makes nothing, sir.

King. If it mar nothing neither,
The treason and you go in peace away together.

[12] A bird is said to be *pruning* himself when he picks and sleeks his feathers.

[13] That is, "what *does* treason here?"

Jaq. I beseech your grace, let this letter be read
Our parson misdoubts it; 'twas treason, he said.

King. Biron, read it over. [*Giving him the letter*
Where hadst thou it?

Jaq. Of Costard.

King. Where hadst thou it?

Cost. Of Dun Adramadio, Dun Adramadio.

King. How now! what is in you? why dost thou tear it?

Bir. A toy, my liege, a toy: your grace needs not fear it.

Lon. It did move him to passion, and therefore let's hear it.

Dum. It is Biron's writing, and here is his name.
[*Picks up the pieces.*

Bir. [*To* COSTARD.] Ah, you whoreson loggerhead! you were born to do me shame.—
Guilty, my lord, guilty! I confess, I confess.

King. What?

Bir. That you three fools lack'd me, fool, to make up the mess:
He, he, and you, and you, my liege, and I,
Are pick-purses in love, and we deserve to die.
O! dismiss this audience, and I shall tell you more.

Dum. Now the number is even.

Bir. True; true; we are four:—
Will these turtles be gone?

King. Hence, sirs; away!

Cost. Walk aside the true folk, and let the traitors stay. [*Exeunt* COST. *and* JAQ.

Bir. Sweet lords, sweet lovers, O let us em brace!
As true we are, as flesh and blood can be:
The sea will ebb and flow, heaven show his face;
Young blood will not obey an old decree:

We cannot cross the cause why we were born;
Therefore, of all hands must we be forsworn.

King. What! did these rent lines show some love of thine?

Bir. Did they, quoth you? Who sees the heavenly Rosaline,
That like a rude and savage man of Inde,
At the first opening of the gorgeous east,
Bows not his vassal head; and, stricken blind,
Kisses the base ground with obedient breast?
What peremptory eagle-sighted eye
Dares look upon the heaven of her brow,
That is not blinded by her majesty?

King. What zeal, what fury hath inspired thee now?

My love, her mistress, is a gracious moon;
She, an attending star, scarce seen a light.

Bir. My eyes are then no eyes, nor I Biron
O, but for my love, day would turn to night!
Of all complexions the cull'd sovereignty
Do meet, as at a fair, in her fair cheek;
Where several worthies make one dignity;
Where nothing wants, that want itself doth seek.
Lend me the flourish of all gentle tongues, —
Fie, painted rhetoric! O! she needs it not:
To things of sale a seller's praise belongs;
She passes praise; then praise too short doth blot
A wither'd hermit, five-score winters worn,
Might shake off fifty, looking in her eye:
Beauty doth varnish age, as if new-born,
And gives the crutch the cradle's infancy.
O, 'tis the sun that maketh all things shine!

King. By Heaven, thy love is black as ebony

Bir. Is ebony like her? O wood divine!
A wife of such wood were felicity.

O! who can give an oath? where is a book?
That I may swear beauty doth beauty lack,
If that she learn not of her eye to look:
No face is fair, that is not full so black.

King. O paradox! Black is the badge of hell,
The hue of dungeons, and the scowl of night;
And beauty's crest becomes the heavens well.

Bir. Devils soonest tempt, resembling spirits of light.
O! if in black my lady's brows be deck'd,
It mourns, that painting, and usurping hair,[14]
Should ravish doters with a false aspect;
And therefore is she born to make black fair.
Her favour turns the fashion of the days;
For native blood is counted painting now;
And therefore red, that would avoid dispraise,
Paints itself black, to imitate her brow.

Dum. To look like her, are chimney-sweepers black.

Lon. And since her time, are colliers counted bright.

King. And Ethiopes of their sweet complexion crack.

Dum. Dark needs no candles now, for dark is light.

Bir. Your mistresses dare never come in rain,
For fear their colours should be wash'd away.

King. 'Twere good, yours did; for, sir, to tell you plain,
I'll find a fairer face not wash'd to-day.

Bir. I'll prove her fair, or talk till doomsday here.

[14] This alludes to the fashion, prevalent among ladies in Shakespeare's time, of wearing false hair, or *periwigs* as they were then called, before that covering for the head had been adopted by men. See Much Ado about Nothing, Act ii. sc. 3, note 4.

King. No devil will fright thee then so much as she.

Dum. I never knew man hold vile stuff so dear.

Lon. Look, here's thy love: my foot and her face see. [*Showing his shoe.*

Bir. O! if the streets were paved with thine eyes,
Her feet were much too dainty for such tread.

Dum. O vile! then as she goes, what upward lies
The street should see as she walk'd over head.

King. But what of this? Are we not all in love?

Bir. O! nothing so sure; and thereby all forsworn.

King. Then leave this chat; and, good Biron, now prove
Our loving lawful, and our faith not torn.

Dum. Ay, marry, there: some flattery for this evil.

Lon. O! some authority how to proceed;
Some tricks, some quillets,[15] how to cheat the devil.

Dum. Some salve for perjury.

Bir. O! 'tis more than need.—
Have at you, then, affection's men at arms.
Consider, what you first did swear unto;—
To fast,—to study,—and to see no woman;—
Flat treason 'gainst the kingly state of youth.
Say, can you fast? your stomachs are too young;
And abstinence engenders maladies.
And where that you have vow'd to study, lords,
In that each of you hath forsworn his book:
Can you still dream, and pore, and thereon look?
For when would you, my lord, or you, or you,
Have found the ground of study's excellence,

[15] A *quillet* is a sly trick or turn in argument, or excuse. Bailey derives it, with much probability, from *quibblet*, as a diminutive of *quibble*.

Without the beauty of a woman's face?
From women's eyes this doctrine I derive?
They are the ground, the books, the Academes,
From whence doth spring the true Promethean fire
Why, universal plodding prisons up
The nimble spirits in the arteries;
As motion, and long during action, tires
The sinewy vigour of the traveller.
Now, for not looking on a woman's face,
You have in that forsworn the use of eyes,
And study, too, the causer of your vow;
For where is any author in the world,
Teaches such learning as a woman's eye?
Learning is but an adjunct to ourself,
And where we are our learning likewise is:
Then, when ourselves we see in ladies' eyes,
With ourselves
Do we not likewise see our learning there?
O! we have made a vow to study, lords,
And in that vow we have forsworn our books;
For when would you, my liege, or you, or you,
In leaden contemplation, have found out
Such fiery numbers, as the prompting eyes
Of beauty's tutors have enrich'd you with?
Other slow arts entirely keep the brain;
And therefore, finding barren practisers,
Scarce show a harvest of their heavy toil:
But love, first learned in a lady's eyes,
Lives not alone immured in the brain;
But, with the motion of all elements,
Courses as swift as thought in every power,
And gives to every power a double power,
Above their functions and their offices.
It adds a precious seeing to the eye;
A lover's eyes will gaze an eagle blind;

A lover's ear will hear the lowest sound,
When the suspicious head of theft is stopp'd;
Love's feeling is more soft, and sensible,
Than are the tender horns of cockled snails;
Love's tongue proves dainty Bacchus gross in taste
For valour, is not love a Hercules,
Still climbing trees in the Hesperides?[16]
Subtle as sphinx; as sweet, and musical,
As bright Apollo's lute, strung with his hair;[17]
And, when love speaks, the voice of all the gods
Makes heaven drowsy with the harmony.[18]
Never durst poet touch a pen to write,
Until his ink were temper'd with love's sighs;

[16] That is, the Garden of the Hesperides. Some of the commentators have made a very needless ado about the Poet's mistake, as they call it, in thus putting the name of the owners for the name of the thing owned. But the same thing was done by several writers of that time; and indeed similar forms of elliptical expression often occur in all sorts of writing and conversation. Gabriel Harvey, a man of unquestionable learning, uses Hesperides in the same way. Thus, also, in Greene's Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay:

> "Show the tree, leav'd with refined gold,
> Whereon the fearful dragon held his seat,
> That watch'd the *garden call'd Hesperides.*" H.

[17] The same matter has been thus turned to poetical uses by Crashaw:

> "Trembling as when Apollo's golden hairs
> Are fann'd and frizzled in the wanton airs
> Of his own breath; which, married to his lyre,
> Doth tune the spheres, and make heaven's self look higher." H.

[18] Heath thus explains this passage: "Whenever Love speaks, all the gods join their voices with his in harmonious concert." The sleep-persuading powers of music have been much celebrated by poets of all times, and are probably well known to all who have been children. Shirley in his Love Tricks carries the thing about far enough:

> "The tongue that's able to rock heaven asleep,
> And make the music of the spheres stand still,
> To listen to the happier airs it makes,
> And mend their tunes by it." H

O! then his lines would ravish savage ears,
And plant in tyrants mild humility.
From women's eyes this doctrine I derive:
They sparkle still the right Promethean fire;
They are the books, the arts, the Academes,
That show, contain, and nourish all the world;
Else, none at all in aught proves excellent.
Then, fools you were these women to forswear;
Or, keeping what is sworn, you will prove fools.
For wisdom's sake, a word that all men love;
Or for love's sake, a word that loves all men;[19]
Or for men's sake, the authors of these women;
Or women's sake, by whom we men are men;
Let us once lose our oaths to find ourselves,
Or else we lose ourselves to keep our oaths:
It is religion to be thus forsworn;
For charity itself fulfils the law,
And who can sever love from charity?

King. Saint Cupid, then! and, soldiers, to the field!

Bir. Advance your standards, and upon them, lords!

Pell-mell, down with them! but be first advis'd,
In conflict that you get the sun of them.[20]

Lon. Now to plain-dealing; lay these glozes by:
Shall we resolve to woo these girls of France?

King. And win them too: therefore let us devise
Some entertainment for them in their tents.

Bir. First, from the park let us conduct them thither;

[19] That is, pleasing to all men. So, in the language of the time: *It likes me well,* for *it pleases me.*

[20] In the days of archery, it was of consequence to have the sun at the back of the bowmen, and in the face of the enemy. This circumstance was of great advantage to Henry V. at the battle of Agincourt.

Then, homeward, every man attach the hand
Of his fair mistress: in the afternoon
We will with some strange pastime solace them,
Such as the shortness of the time can shape;
For revels, dances, masks, and merry hours,
Fore-run fair Love,[21] strowing her way with flowers.

King. Away, away! no time shall be omitted,
That will be time, and may by us be fitted.

Bir. Allons! Allons! — Sow'd cockle reap'd no corn;[22]
And justice always whirls in equal measure:
Light wenches may prove plagues to men forsworn,
If so, our copper buys no better treasure. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. Another part of the same.

Enter HOLOFERNES, *Sir* NATHANIEL, *and* DULL.

Hol. Satis quod sufficit.[1]

Nath. I praise God for you, sir: your reasons[2] at dinner have been sharp and sententious; pleasant without scurrility, witty without affection, audacious

[21] *Fair Love* is *Venus.* So in Antony and Cleopatra:
"Now for the love of *Love*, and *her* soft hours."

[22] That is, *where* cockle *is* sow'd, no corn *is* reap'd. H.

[1] That is, enough's as good as a feast.

[2] Johnson says, "I know not what degree of respect Shakespeare intends to obtain for his vicar, but he has put into his mouth a finished representation of colloquial excellence." *Reason* here signifies *discourse; audacious* is used in a good sense for *spirited, animated, confident; affection* is *affectation; opinion* is *obstinacy, opiniâtreté*

without impudency, learned without opinion, and strange without heresy. I did converse this *quondam* day with a companion of the king's, who is intituled, nominated, or called, Don Adriano de Armado.

Hol. Novi hominem tanquam te His humour is lofty, his discourse peremptory, his tongue filed,[3] his eye ambitious, his gait majestical, and his general behaviour vain, ridiculous, and thrasonical. He is too picked, too spruce, too affected, too odd, as it were, too peregrinate, as I may call it.

Nath. A most singular and choice epithet.

[*Takes out his table-book.*

Hol. He draweth out the thread of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument. I abhor such fantastical phantasms, such insociable and point-device[4] companions; such rackers of orthography, as to speak dout, fine, when he should say doubt; det, when he should pronounce debt; d, e, b, t, not d, e, t: he clepeth a calf, cauf; half, hauf; neighbour, *vocatur*, nebour, neigh, abbreviated, ne: This is abhominable, (which he would call abominable;) it insinuateth me of insanie: *ne intelligis, domine?* to make frantic, lunatic.

Nath. Laus deo, bone intelligo.

Hol. Bone? — bone, for *benè: Priscian* a little scratch'd; 'twill serve.

Enter ARMADO, MOTH, *and* COSTARD.

Nath. Videsne quis venit?

Hol. Video, et gaudeo.

[3] *Filed* is polished. — *Thrasonical* is vainglorious, boastful. — *Picked*, piked, or picket, neat, spruce, over nice; that is, *too nice in his dress.*

[4] A common expression for *exact, precise*, or *finical.* So, in Twelfth Night, Malvolio says. "I will be *point-device* the very man."

Arm. [*To* MOTH.] Chirra!

Hol. *Quare* Chirra, not sirrah?

Arm. Men of peace, well encountered.

Hol. Most military sir, salutation.

Moth. [*To* COST.] They have been at a great feast of languages, and stolen the scraps.

Cost. O! they have lived long in the alms-basket[5] of words. I marvel thy master hath not eaten thee for a word; for thou art not so long by the head as *honorificabilitudinitatibus:*[6] thou art easier swallowed than a flap-dragon.[7]

Moth. Peace! the peal begins.

Arm. [*To* HOL.] Monsieur, are you not letter'd?

Moth. Yes, yes; he teaches boys the horn-book: What is a, b, spelt backward with a horn on his head?

Hol. Ba, *pueritia*, with a horn added.

Moth. Ba! most silly sheep, with a horn:—You hear his learning.

Hol. *Quis*, *quis*, thou consonant?

Moth. The third of the five vowels, if you repeat them; or the fifth, if I.

Hol. I will repeat them, a, e, i.—

Moth. The sheep: the other two concludes it; o, u.

Arm. Now, by the salt wave of the Mediterraneum, a sweet touch, a quick veney[8] of wit: snip, snap, quick and home; it rejoiceth my intellect: true wit.

[5] That is, the refuse of words. The refuse meat of families was put into a *basket*, and given to the poor, in Shakespeare's time.

[6] This word, whencesoever it comes, is often mentioned as the longest word known.

[7] A *flap-dragon* was some small combustible body set on fire and put afloat in a glass of liquor. It was an act of dexterity in the toper to swallow it without burning his mouth.

[8] A hit. See The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act i. sc. 1, note 29.

Moth. Offer'd by a child to an old man; which is wit-old.

Hol. What is the figure? what is the figure?

Moth. Horns.

Hol. Thou disputest like an infant: go, whip thy gig.

Moth. Lend me your horn to make one, and I will whip about your infamy *circùm circà:* A gig of a cuckold's horn!

Cost. An I had but one penny in the world, thou shouldst have it to buy gingerbread: hold, there is the very remuneration I had of thy master, thou half-penny purse of wit, thou pigeon-egg of discretion. O! an the heavens were so pleased, that thou wert but my bastard; what a joyful father wouldst thou make me! Go to; thou hast it *ad dunghill*, at the fingers' ends, as they say.

Hol. O! I smell false Latin; dunghill for *unguem.*

Arm. Arts-man, *præambula:* we will be singled from the barbarous. Do you not educate youth at the charge-house[9] on the top of the mountain?

Hol. Or, *mons*, the hill.

Arm. At your sweet pleasure, for the mountain.

Hol. I do, sans question.

Arm. Sir, it is the king's most sweet pleasure and affection, to congratulate the princess at her pavilion, in the posteriors of this day; which the rude multitude call the afternoon.

Hol. The posterior of the day, most generous sir, is liable, congruent, and measurable for the afternoon: the word is well cull'd, chose; sweet and apt, I do assure you, sir; I do assure.

Arm. Sir, the king is a noble gentleman; and

[9] Free school.

my familiar, I do assure you, very good friend. — For what is inward[10] between us, let it pass. — I do beseech thee, remember thy courtesy ;[11] — I beseech thee, apparel thy head: — and among other important and most serious designs, — and of great import indeed, too ; — but let that pass : — for I must tell thee, it will please his grace (by the world) sometime to lean upon my poor shoulder ; and with his royal finger, thus, dally with my excrement,[12] with my mustachio : but, sweet heart, let that pass. By the world, I recount no fable : some certain special honours it pleaseth his greatness to impart to Armado, a soldier, a man of travel, that hath seen the world ; but let that pass. — The very all of all is, — but, sweet heart, I do implore secrecy, — that the king would have me present the princess, sweet chuck, with some delightful ostentation, or show, or pageant, or antic, or firework. Now, understanding that the curate and your sweet self are good at such eruptions, and sudden breaking out of mirth, as it were, I have acquainted you withal, to the end to crave your assistance.

Hol. Sir, you shall present before her the nine Worthies. — Sir Nathaniel, as concerning some entertainment of time, some show in the posterior of this day, to be render'd by our assistance, — the king's command, and this most gallant, illustrate, and learned gentleman, — before the princess ; I say, none so fit as to present the nine Worthies.

Nath. Where will you find men worthy enough to present them ?

[10] Confidential.

[11] By *remember thy courtesy,* Armado probably means "remember that all this time thou art standing with thy hat off."

[12] The *beard* is cal'ed valour's *excrement* in The Merchant of Venice.

Hol. Joshua, yourself; myself, or this gallant gentleman, Judas Maccabeus; this swain, because of his great limb or joint, shall pass [13] Pompey the great; the page, Hercules.

Arm. Pardon, sir; error: he is not quantity enough for that Worthy's thumb: he is not so big as the end of his club.

Hol. Shall I have audience? He shall present Hercules in minority: his *enter* and *exit* shall be strangling a snake; and I will have an apology for that purpose.

Moth. An excellent device! so, if any of the audience hiss, you may cry, "Well done, Hercules! now thou crushest the snake!" that is the way to make an offence gracious, though few have the grace to do it.

Arm. For the rest of the Worthies?—

Hol. I will play three myself.

Moth. Thrice-worthy gentleman!

Arm. Shall I tell you a thing?

Hol. We attend.

Arm. We will have, if this fadge not,[14] an antic I beseech you, follow.

Hol. *Via*,[15] goodman Dull! thou hast spoken no word all this while.

Dull. Nor understood none neither, sir.

Hol. *Allons!* we will employ thee.

Dull. I'll make one in a dance, or so; or I will play on the tabor to the Worthies, and let them dance the hay.

Hol. Most dull, honest Dull: to our sport, away! [*Exeunt.*

[13] That is, shall *march*, or walk in the procession for Pompey.

[14] That is, suit not, go not. See Twelfth Night, Act ii. sc. 2 note 6.

[15] An Italian exclamation, signifying Courage! Come on! See The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act ii. sc. 2, note 15.

SCENE II. Another part of the same.

Before the PRINCESS's Pavilion.

Enter the PRINCESS, KATHARINE, ROSALINE, *and* MARIA.

Prin. Sweet hearts, we shall be rich ere we depart,
If fairings come thus plentifully in:
A lady wall'd about with diamonds! —
Look you, what I have from the loving king.

Ros. Madam, came nothing else along with that?

Prin. Nothing but this? yes, as much love in rhyme,
As would be cramm'd up in a sheet of paper,
Writ on both sides the leaf, margent and all;
That he was fain to seal on Cupid's name.

Ros. That was the way to make his god-head wax:[1]
For he hath been five thousand years a boy.

Kath. Ay, and a shrewd unhappy gallows too.

Ros. You'll ne'er be friends with him: a' killed your sister.

Kath. He made her melancholy, sad, and heavy;
And so she died: had she been light, like you,
Of such a merry, nimble, stirring spirit,
She might have been a grandam ere she died:
And so may you; for a light heart lives long.

Ros. What's your dark meaning, mouse,[2] of this light word?

Kath. A light condition in a beauty dark.

[1] Grow. The pun is obvious.

[2] This was a term of endearment formerly. So, in Hamlet "Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his *mouse*."

Ros. We need more light to find your meaning out.

Kath. You'll mar the light, by taking it in snuff;[3] Therefore, I'll darkly end the argument.

Ros. Look, what you do, you do it still i' the dark.

Kath. So do not you; for you are a light wench.

Ros. Indeed, I weigh not you; and therefore light.

Kath. You weigh me not? — O! that's you care not for me.

Ros. Great reason; for, past cure is still past care.

Prin. Well bandied both; a set[4] of wit well play'd.
But, Rosaline, you have a favour too:
Who sent it? and what is it?

Ros. I would, you knew
An if my face were but as fair as yours,
My favour were as great: be witness this.
Nay, I have verses too, I thank Biron:
The numbers true; and, were the numbering too,
I were the fairest goddess on the ground:
I am compar'd to twenty thousand fairs.
O, he hath drawn my picture in his letter!

Prin. Any thing like?

Ros. Much, in the letters; nothing in the praise.

Prin. Beauteous as ink: a good conclusion.

Kath. Fair as a text B in a copy-book.

Ros. 'Ware pencils,[5] ho! let me not die your debtor,

[3] *Snuff* is here used equivocally for *anger*, and the *snuff of a candle*.

[4] A *set* is a term at tennis for a *game*.

[5] She advises Katharine to *beware of drawing likenesses*, lest she should retaliate.

My red dominical, my golden letter :
O, that your face were not so full of O's !

Prin. A pox[6] of that jest ! and I beshrew all shrows !

But, Katharine, what was sent to you from fair Dumain ?

Kath. Madam, this glove.

Prin. Did he not send you twain ?

Kath. Yes, madam ; and, moreover,
Some thousand verses of a faithful lover :
A huge translation of hypocrisy,
Vilely compil'd, profound simplicity.

Mar. This, and these pearls, to me sent Longaville :
The letter is too long by half a mile.

Prin. I think no less : Dost thou not wish in heart
The chain were longer, and the letter short ?

Mar. Ay, or I would these hands might never part.

Prin. We are wise girls, to mock our lovers so.

Ros. They are worse fools to purchase mocking so.

That same Biron I'll torture ere I go.
O, that I knew he were but in by the week ![7]
How I would make him fawn, and beg, and seek,
And wait the season, and observe the times,
And spend his prodigal wits in bootless rhymes,
And shape his service wholly to my behests,
And make him proud to make me proud that jests !

[6] Katharine's face, it seems, was *pitted*, she having had the *small-pox* : hence the "pox of that jest ;" the Princess turning off the talk, lest it get too personal. H.

[7] This is an expression taken from the hiring of servants ; meaning, "I wish I knew that he was in love with me, or my *servant*," as the phrase was.

So persantly [8] would I o'ersway his state,
That he should be my fool, and I his fate.

Prin. None are so surely caught, when they are catch'd,
As wit turn'd fool: folly, in wisdom hatch'd,
Hath wisdom's warrant, and the help of school;
And wit's own grace to grace a learned fool.

Ros. The blood of youth burns not with such excess,
As gravity's revolt to wantonness.

Mar. Folly in fools bears not so strong a note,
As foolery in the wise, when wit doth dote;
Since all the power thereof it doth apply,
To prove, by wit, worth in simplicity.

Enter BOYET.

Prin. Here comes Boyet, and mirth is in his face.

Boy. O, I am stabb'd with laughter! Where's her grace?

Prin. Thy news, Boyet?

Boy. Prepare, madam, prepare!—
Arm, wenches, arm! encounters mounted are
Against your peace: Love doth approach disguis'd,
Armed in arguments; you'll be surpris'd:
Muster your wits; stand in your own defence;
Or hide your heads like cowards, and fly hence.

Prin. Saint Dennis to saint Cupid! What are they
That charge their breath against us? say, scout, say

Boy. Under the cool shade of a sycamore,
I thought to close mine eyes some half an hour;
When, lo! to interrupt my purpos'd rest,
Toward that shade I might behold addrest

[8] The old copies read *pertaunt-like*. The modern editions read with Sir T. Hanmer, *portent-like*.

The king and his companions: warily
I stole into a neighbour thicket by,
And overheard what you shall overhear;
That, by and by, disguis'd they will be here.
Their herald is a pretty knavish page,
That well by heart hath conn'd his embassage:
Action, and accent, did they teach him there;
"Thus must thou speak, and thus thy body bear:"
And ever and anon they made a doubt,
Presence majestical would put him out;
"For," quoth the king, "an angel shalt thou see;
Yet fear not thou, but speak audaciously."
The boy replied, "An angel is not evil;
I should have fear'd her, had she been a devil."
With that all laugh'd, and clapp'd him on the shoulder;
Making the bold wag by their praises bolder.
One rubb'd his elbow thus, and fleer'd and swore
A better speech was never spoke before:
Another, with his finger and his thumb,
Cried, "*Via!*[9] we will do't, come what will come:"
The third he caper'd, and cried, "All goes well:"
The fourth turn'd on the toe, and down he fell.
With that they all did tumble on the ground,
With such a zealous laughter, so profound,
That in the spleen ridiculous[10] appears,
To check their folly, passion's solemn tears.

Prin. But what, but what! come they to visit us?

Boy. They do, they do; and are apparel'd thus,—
Like Muscovites, or Russians:[11] as I guess,

[9] See the preceding scene, note 15.

[10] That is, a *fit* of laughter. The spleen was anciently supposed to be the cause of laughter. So the old Latin verse: "*Splen* ridere facit, cogit amare jecur." See A Midsummer-Night's Dream, Act i. sc. 1, note 7.

[11] Hall, describing a banquet made for the foreign embassadors

The purpose is, to parle, to court, and dance:
And every one his love-suit will advance
Unto his several mistress; which they'll know
By favours several, which they did bestow.

Prin. And will they so? the gallants shall be task'd:
For, ladies, we will every one be mask'd;
And not a man of them shall have the grace,
Despite of suit, to see a lady's face. —
Hold, Rosaline, this favour thou shalt wear;
And then the king will court thee for his dear:
Hold, take thou this, my sweet, and give me thine;
So shall Biron take me for Rosaline. —
And change you favours, too; so shall your loves
Woo contrary, deceiv'd by these removes.

Ros. Come on, then: wear the favours most in sight.

Kath. But in this changing what is your intent?

Prin. The effect of my intent is, to cross theirs
They do it but in mocking merriment;
And mock for mock is only my intent.
Their several counsels they unbosom shall
To loves mistook; and so be mock'd withal,
Upon the next occasion that we meet,
With visages display'd, to talk, and greet.

Ros. But shall we dance, if they desire us to't?

Prin. No; to the death, we will not move a foot:

at Westminster, in the first year of Henry VIII., says, there "came the Lorde Henry Earle of Wiltshire and the Lorde Fitzwater, in two long gownes of yellow satin traversed with white satin, and in every bend of white was a bend of crimosen sattin after the fashion of Russia or Ruslande, with furred hattes of grey on their hedes, either of them havyng an hatchet in their handes, and bootes with pykes turned up." Which may serve to show that a mask of Muscovites was a court recreation, and at the same time convey an idea of the dress used on the present occasion.

Nor to their penn'd speech render we no grace;
But, while 'tis spoke, each turn away her face.

Boy. Why, that contempt will kill the speaker's heart,
And quite divorce his memory from his part.

Prin. Therefore I do it; and I make no doubt,
The rest will ne'er come in, if he be out.
There's no such sport, as sport by sport o'erthrown;
To make theirs ours, and ours none but our own:
So shall we stay, mocking intended game;
And they, well mock'd, depart away with shame.

[*Trumpets sound within.*

Boy. The trumpet sounds: be mask'd, the maskers come. [*The Ladies mask.*

Enter the KING, BIRON, LONGAVILLE, *and* DUMAIN, *in Russian habits, and masked;* MOTH, *Musicians, and Attendants.*

Moth. "All hail, the richest beauties on the earth!"

Boy. Beauties no richer than rich taffata.

Moth. "A holy parcel of the fairest dames,
[*The Ladies turn their backs to him.*
That ever turn'd their — backs — to mortal views!"

Bir. "Their eyes," villain, "their eyes."

Moth. "That ever turn'd their eyes to mortal views! Out" —

Boy. True; "out," indeed.

Moth. "Out of your favours, heavenly spirits, vouchsafe
Not to behold" —

Bir. "Once to behold," rogue.

Moth. "Once to behold with your sun-beamed eyes, — with your sun-beamed eyes," —

Boy. They will not answer to that epithet;
You were best call it daughter-beamed eyes.

Moth. They do not mark me, and that brings me out.

Bir. Is this your perfectness? be gone, you rogue.

Ros. What would these strangers? know their minds, Boyet:

If they do speak our language, 'tis our will
That some plain man recount their purposes:
Know what they would.

Boy. What would you with the princess?

Bir. Nothing but peace, and gentle visitation.

Ros. What would they, say they?

Boy. Nothing but peace, and gentle visitation.

Ros. Why, that they have; and bid them so be gone.

Boy. She says you have it, and you may be gone.

King. Say to her we have measur'd many miles,
To tread a measure [12] with her on this grass.

Boy. They say that they have measur'd many a mile,
To tread a measure with you on this grass.

Ros. It is not so: ask them how many inches
Is in one mile? if they have measur'd many,
The measure, then, of one is easily told.

Boy. If, to come hither, you have measur'd miles,
And many miles, the princess bids you tell
How many inches do fill up one mile.

Bir. Tell her we measure them by weary steps.

Boy. She hears herself.

Ros. How many weary steps,
Of many weary miles you have o'ergone,
Are number'd in the travel of one mile?

[12] A grave, solemn dance, with slow and measured steps, like the minuet. As it was of so solemn a nature, it was performed at public entertainments in the Inns of Court; and it was not unusual, nor thought inconsistent, for the first characters in the law to bear a part in *treading a measure*. Sir Christopher Hatton was famous for it.

Bir. We number nothing that we spend for you:
Our duty is so rich, so infinite,
That we may do it still without accompt.
Vouchsafe to show the sunshine of your face,
That we, like savages, may worship it.

Ros. My face is but a moon, and clouded too.

King. Blessed are clouds, to do as such clouds do!
Vouchsafe, bright moon, and these thy stars, to shine
(Those clouds remov'd) upon our watery eyne.

Ros. O, vain petitioner! beg a greater matter;
Thou now request'st but moonshine in the water.

King. Then, in our measure but vouchsafe one change:
Thou bid'st me beg; this begging is not strange.

Ros. Play, music, then: nay, you must do it soon. [*Music plays.*
Not yet; — no dance: — thus change I like the moon.

King. Will you not dance? How come you thus estrang'd?

Ros. You took the moon at full; but now she's chang'd.

King. Yet still she is the moon, and I the man.
The music plays: vouchsafe some motion to it.

Ros. Our ears vouchsafe it.

King But your legs should do it.

Ros. Since you are strangers, and come here by chance,
We'll not be nice: take hands; — we will not dance.

King. Why take we hands, then?

Ros. Only to part friends: —
Court'sy, sweet hearts; and so the measure ends.

King. More measure of this measure; be not nice

Ros. We can afford no more at such a price.

King. Prize you yourselves: What buys your company?

Ros. Your absence only.

King. That can never be.

Ros. Then cannot we be bought: and so adieu
Twice to your visor, and half once to you!

King If you deny to dance, let's hold more chat

Ros. In private, then.

King. I am best pleas'd with that

[*They converse apart*

Bir. White-handed mistress, one sweet word with thee.

Prin. Honey, and milk, and sugar; there are three.

Bir. Nay, then, two treys, (an if you grow so nice,)
Metheglin, wort, and malmsey: — Well run, dice!
There's half a dozen sweets.

Prin. Seventh sweet, adieu!
Since you can cog,[13] I'll play no more with you.

Bir. One word in secret.

Prin. Let it not be sweet.

Bir. Thou griev'st my gall.

Prin. Gall? bitter.

Bir. Therefore meet.

[*They converse apart.*

Dum. Will you vouchsafe with me to change a word?

Mar. Name it.

Dum. Fair lady, —

Mar. Say you so? Fair lord; —
Take that for your fair lady.

Dum. Please it you,
As much in private, and I'll bid adieu.

[*They converse apart*

[13] To *cog* is to load dice; hence to *cheat, deceive.*

Kath. What! was your visor made without a tongue?

Lon. I know the reason, lady, why you ask.

Kath. O, for your reason! quickly, sir; I long.

Lon. You have a double tongue within your mask,
And would afford my speechless visor half.

Kath. Veal,[14] quoth the Dutchman: — Is not veal a calf?

Lon. A calf, fair lady?

Kath. No, a fair lord calf.

Lon. Let's part the word.

Kath. No; I'll not be your half:
Take all, and wean it; it may prove an ox.

Lon. Look, how you butt yourself in these sharp mocks!
Will you give horns, chaste lady? do not so.

Kath. Then die a calf, before your horns do grow.

Lon. One word in private with you, ere I die.

Kath. Bleat softly, then; the butcher hears you cry. [*They converse apart.*

Boy. The tongues of mocking wenches are as keen
As is the razor's edge invisible,
Cutting a smaller hair than may be seen;
Above the sense of sense, so sensible
Seemeth their conference; their conceits have wings
Fleeter than arrows, bullets, wind, thought, swifter things.

Ros. Not one word more, my maids: break off, break off.

Bir. By Heaven, all dry-beaten with pure scoff!

[14] The same joke occurs in Dr. Dodypoll. "*Doct.* Hans, my very speciall friend; fait and trot, me be right glad for see you *veale*. *Hans.* What, do you make a *calfe* of me, M. Doctor?"

King. Farewell, mad wenches: you have simple wits. [*Exeunt* KING, *Lords*, MOTH, *Music, and Attendants.*

Prin. Twenty adieus, my frozen Muscovites. — Are these the breed of wits so wonder'd at?

Boy. Tapers they are, with your sweet breaths puff'd out.

Ros Well-liking[15] wits they have; gross, gross; fat, fat.

Prin. O, poverty in wit, kingly-poor flout! Will they not, think you, hang themselves to-night. Or ever, but in visors, show their faces? This pert Biron was out of countenance quite.

Ros. They were all in lamentable cases! The king was weeping-ripe for a good word.

Prin. Biron did swear himself out of all suit.

Mar. Dumain was at my service, and his sword: *No point*,[16] quoth I: my servant straight was mute.

Kath. Lord Longaville said, I came o'er his heart; And trow you what he call'd me?

Prin. Qualm, perhaps.

Kath. Yes, in good faith.

Prin. Go, sickness as thou art!

Ros. Well, better wits have worn plain statute-caps.[17] But will you hear? the king is my love sworn.

[15] *Well-conditioned, fat.* So, in Job, xxxix. 4: "Their young ones are in *good-liking*." And in The Book of Common Prayer, Psalm xcii.: "They shall also bring forth more fruit in their age, and shall be fat and *well-liking*." H.

[16] *No point.* A quibble on the French adverb of negation, as before, Act ii. sc. 1, note 6.

[17] An act was passed in 1571, "for the continuance of making and wearing woollen caps, in behalf of the trade of cappers, providing that all above the age of six years (except the nobility and some others) should, on Sabbath days and holidays, wear caps of wool, knit, thicked, and drest in England, upon penalty of ten groats." The term *flat cap* for a citizen will now be familiar to

Prin. And quick Biron hath plighted faith to me.
Kath. And Longaville was for my service born
Mar. Dumain is mine, as sure as bark on tree.
Boy. Madam, and pretty mistresses, give ear:
Immediately they will again be here
In their own shapes; for it can never be,
They will digest this harsh indignity.
Prin. Will they return?
Boy. They will, they will, God knows;
And leap for joy, though they are lame with blows:
Therefore, change favours; and, when they repair,
Blow like sweet roses in this summer air.
Prin. How blow? how blow? speak to be understood.
Boy. Fair ladies, mask'd, are roses in their bud:
Dismask'd, their damask sweet commixture shown,
Are angels vailing clouds,[18] or roses blown.
Prin. Avaunt, perplexity! What shall we do,
If they return in their own shapes to woo?
Ros. Good madam, if by me you'll be advis'd,
Let's mock them still, as well, known, as disguis'd:
Let us complain to them what fools were here,
Disguis'd like Muscovites, in shapeless gear;
And wonder what they were, and to what end
Their shallow shows, and prologue vilely penn'd,
And their rough carriage so ridiculous,
Should be presented at our tent to us.
Boy. Ladies, withdraw: the gallants are at hand.
Prin. Whip to our tents, as roes run over land.
[*Exeunt* PRINCESS, ROS., KATH., *and* MARIA.

most readers from the use made of it in The Fortunes of Nigel. The meaning of this passage probably is, "better wits may be found among plain citizens." So, in The Family of Love, 1608: "It is a law enacted by the common-council of *statute-caps*."

[18] *Ladies unmasked* are like *angels vailing clouds*, or letting those clouds which obscured their brightness *sink* before them.

Enter the KING, BIRON, LONGAVILLE, *and* DUMAIN, *in their proper habits.*

King. Fair sir, God save you! Where is the princess?

Boy. Gone to her tent: Please it your majesty, Command me any service to her thither?

King. That she vouchsafe me audience for one word.

Boy. I will; and so will she, I know, my lord. [*Exit*

Bir. This fellow pecks up wit, as pigeons peas,
And utters it again when Jove doth please:
He is wit's pedler, and retails his wares
At wakes and wassels,[19] meetings, markets, fairs;
And we that sell by gross, the Lord doth know,
Have not the grace to grace it with such show.
This gallant pins the wenches on his sleeve:
Had he been Adam, he had tempted Eve.
He can carve, too, and lisp: why, this is he,
That kiss'd his hand away in courtesy;
This is the ape of form, Monsieur the Nice,
That, when he plays at tables, chides the dice
In honourable terms: nay, he can sing
A mean[20] most meanly; and, in ushering,
Mend him who can: the ladies call him, sweet;
The stairs, as he treads on them, kiss his feet:
This is the flower that smiles on every one,
To show his teeth as white as whalës bone;[21]

[19] *Wassels;* festive meetings, drinking-bouts: from the Saxon *was-hæl*, be in health, which was the form of drinking a health; the customary answer to which was, *drine-hæl*, I drink your health.

[20] The tenor in music.

[21] *Whalës* bone: the Saxon genitive case. It is a common comparison in the old poets. This bone was the tooth of the *horse-whale*, morse, or walrus, now superseded by ivory.

And consciences, that will not die in debt,
Pay him the due of honey-tongued Boyet.

King. A blister on his sweet tongue with my heart,
That put Armado's page out of his part!

Enter the PRINCESS, *ushered by* BOYET; ROSALINE, MARIA, KATHARINE, *and Attendants.*

Bir. See where it comes! — Behaviour, what wert thou,
Till this man show'd thee? and what art thou now?

King. All hail, sweet madam, and fair time of day!

Prin. Fair, in all hail, is foul, as I conceive

King. Construe my speeches better, if you may.

Prin. Then wish me better: I will give you leave.

King. We came to visit you, and purpose now
To lead you to our court: vouchsafe it, then.

Prin. This field shall hold me; and so hold your vow:
Nor God, nor I, delight in perjur'd men.

King. Rebuke me not for that which you provoke;
The virtue of your eye must break my oath.

Prin. You nick-name virtue: vice you should have spoke;
For virtue's office never breaks men's troth.
Now, by my maiden honour, yet as pure
As the unsullied lily, I protest,
A world of torments though I should endure,
I would not yield to be your house's guest:
So much I hate a breaking-cause to be
Of heavenly oaths, vow'd with integrity.

King. O! you have liv'd in desolation here,
Unseen, unvisited, much to our shame.

Prin. Not so, my lord; it is not so, I swear.

We have had pastimes here, and pleasant game:
A mess of Russians left us but of late.
King. How, madam! Russians?
Prin. Ay, in truth, my lord
Trim gallants, full of courtship, and of state.
Ros. Madam, speak true: — It is not so, my lord:
My lady (to the manner of the days)
In courtesy gives undeserving praise.
We four, indeed, confronted here with four
In Russian habit: here they stay'd an hour,
And talk'd apace; and in that hour, my lord,
They did not bless us with one happy word.
I dare not call them fools; but this I think,
When they are thirsty, fools would fain have drink
Bir. This jest is dry to me. — Fair, gentle sweet
Your wit makes wise things foolish: when we greet,
With eyes best seeing, heaven's fiery eye,
By light we lose light: Your capacity
Is of that nature, that to your huge store
Wise things seem foolish, and rich things but poor
Ros. This proves you wise and rich; for in my eye, —
Bir. I am a fool, and full of poverty.
Ros. But that you take what doth to you belong
It were a fault to snatch words from my tongue.
Bir. O! I am yours, and all that I possess.
Ros. All the fool mine?
Bir. I cannot give you less.
Ros. Which of the visors was it, that you wore?
Bir. Where? when? what visor? why demand you this?
Ros. There, then, that visor; that superfluous case,
That hid the worse, and show'd the better face.
King. We are descried: they'll mock us now downright.

Dum. Let us confess, and turn it to a jest.

Prin. Amaz'd, my lord? Why looks your highness sad?

Ros. Help, hold his brows! he'll swoon! Why look you pale? —

Sea-sick, I think, coming from Muscovy.

Bir. Thus pour the stars down plagues for perjury.

Can any face of brass hold longer out? —
Here stand I, lady; dart thy skill at me;
Bruise me with scorn, confound me with a flout;
Thrust thy sharp wit quite through my ignorance;
Cut me to pieces with thy keen conceit;
And I will wish thee never more to dance,
Nor never more in Russian habit wait.
O! never will I trust to speeches penn'd,
Nor to the motion of a schoolboy's tongue;
Nor never come in visor to my friend;
Nor woo in rhyme, like a blind harper's song:
Taffata phrases, silken terms precise,
Three-pil'd [22] hyperboles, spruce affectation,
Figures pedantical; these summer-flies
Have blown me full of maggot ostentation:
I do forswear them; and I here protest,
By this white glove, (how white the hand, God knows!)
Henceforth my wooing mind shall be express'd
In russet yeas, and honest kersey noes:
And, to begin, wench, — so God help me, la! —
My love to thee is sound, sans crack or flaw.

Ros. Sans *sans*, I pray you.[23]

Bir. Yet I have a trick

[22] A metaphor from the *pile* of velvet. See Measure for Measure, Act i. sc. 2, note 3.

[23] That is, without French words I pray you

Of the old rage: — bear with me, I am sick,
I'll leave it by degrees. Soft! let us see: —
Write, "Lord, have mercy on us,"[24] on those three
They are infected, in their hearts it lies;
They have the plague, and caught it of your eyes:
These lords are visited; you are not free,
For the Lord's tokens on you do I see.

Prin. No, they are free, that gave these tokens to us.

Bir. Our states are forfeit: seek not to undo us.

Ros. It is not so; for how can this be true,
That you stand forfeit, being those that sue?[25]

Bir. Peace! for I will not have to do with you.

Ros. Nor shall not, if I do as I intend.

Bir. Speak for yourselves: my wit is at an end.

King. Teach us, sweet madam, for our rude transgression
Some fair excuse.

Prin. The fairest is confession.
Were you not here, but even now, disguis'd?

King. Madam, I was.

Prin. And were you well advis'd?

King. I was, fair madam.

Prin. When you then were here,
What did you whisper in your lady's ear?

King. That more than all the world I did respect her.

Prin. When she shall challenge this, you will reject her.

King. Upon mine honour, no.

[24] This was the inscription put upon the doors of houses *infected* with the plague. The *tokens* of the plague were the first spots of discolorations of the skin

[25] That is, how can those be liable to forfeiture that begin the process? The quibble lies in the ambiguity of the word *sue* which signifies to *proceed to law*, and to *petition*.

Prin. Peace, peace! forbear:
Your oath once broke, you force [26] not to forswear.
King Despise me, when I break this oath of mine.
Prin. I will; and therefore keep it: — Rosaline.
What did the Russian whisper in your ear?
Ros. Madam, he swore that he did hold me dear
As precious eye-sight, and did value me
Above this world; adding thereto, moreover,
That he would wed me, or else die my lover.
Prin. God give thee joy of him! the noble lord
Most honourably doth uphold his word.
King. What mean you, madam? by my life, my troth,
I never swore this lady such an oath.
Ros. By Heaven, you did; and to confirm it plain,
You gave me this: but take it, sir, again.
King. My faith, and this, the princess I did give,
I knew her by this jewel on her sleeve.
Prin. Pardon me, sir, this jewel did she wear;
And lord Biron, I thank him, is my dear: —
What! will you have me, or your pearl again?
Bir. Neither of either; I remit both twain. —
I see the trick on't: — Here was a consent,
Knowing aforehand of our merriment,
To dash it like a Christmas comedy:
Some carry-tale, some please-man, some slight zany,
Some mumble-news, some trencher-knight, some Dick, —
That smiles his cheek in years, [27] and knows the trick
To make my lady laugh, when she's dispos'd, —
Told our intents before: which once disclos'd,

[26] That is, you *care* not, or do not *regard* forswearing.
[27] That is, makes his cheek *look old* by *smiling*.

The ladies did change favours; and then we,
Following the signs, woo'd but the sign of she.
Now, to our perjury to add more terror,
We are again forsworn, — in will and error.[28]
Much upon this it is: — [*To* BOYET.] And might not you
Forestall our sport, to make us thus untrue?
Do not you know my lady's foot by the squire,[29]
And laugh upon the apple of her eye?
And stand between her back, sir, and the fire,
Holding a trencher, jesting merrily?
You put our page out: Go, you are allow'd; [30]
Die when you will, a smock shall be your shroud.
You leer upon me, do you? there's an eye,
Wounds like a leaden sword.

Boy. Full merrily
Hath this brave manage, this career, been run.

Bir. Lo, he is tilting straight! Peace! I have done.

Enter COSTARD.

Welcome, pure wit! thou partest a fair fray.

Cost. O Lord! sir, they would know,
Whether the three Worthies shall come in, or no.

Bir. What! are there but three?

Cost. No, sir; but it is vara fine,
For every one pursents three.

Bir. And three times thrice is nine.

Cost. Not so, sir; under correction, sir, I hope it is not so:
You cannot beg us,[31] sir, I can assure you, sir; we know what we know:
I hope, sir, three times thrice, sir, —

[28] That is, first in *will*, and afterwards in *error*.
[29] From *esquierre*, Fr., a *rule* or *square*.
[30] That is, you are an *allowed* or a *licensed* fool or jester.
[31] In the old common law was a writ *de idiota inquirendo*, under

Bir. Is not nine.

Cost. Under correction, sir, we know whereuntil 't doth amount.

Bir. By Jove, I always took three threes for nine.

Cost. O Lord! sir, it were pity you should get your living by reckoning, sir.

Bir. How much is it?

Cost. O Lord! sir, the parties themselves, the actors, sir, will show whereuntil it doth amount: for my own part, I am, as they say, but to pursent one man, — e'en one poor man; Pompion the Great, sir.

Bir. Art thou one of the Worthies?

Cost. It pleased them to think me worthy of Pompion the Great: for mine own part, I know not the degree of the Worthy; but I am to stand for him.

Bir. Go, bid them prepare.

Cost. We will turn it finely off, sir; we will take some care. [*Exit* COST

King. Biron, they will shame us; let them not approach.

Bir. We are shame-proof, my lord; and 'tis some policy
To have one show worse than the king's and his company.

King. I say, they shall not come.

Prin. Nay, my good lord, let me o'errule you now;
That sport best pleases, that doth least know how:

which, if a man was legally proved an idiot, the profits of his lands and the custody of his person might be granted by the king to any subject. Such a person, when this grant was asked, was said *to be begged for a fool.* One of the legal tests appears to have been, to try whether the party could answer a simple arithmetical question

Where zeal strives to content, and the contents
Lie in the fail of them which it presents:
Their form confounded makes most form in mirth
When great things labouring perish in their birth.

Bir. A right description of our sport, my lord.

Enter ARMADO.

Arm. Anointed, I implore so much expense of thy royal sweet breath, as will utter a brace of words. [ARMADO *converses with the* KING, *and delivers him a paper.*

Prin. Doth this man serve God?

Bir. Why ask you?

Prin. A' speaks not like a man of God's making.

Arm. That's all one, my fair, sweet, honey monarch: for, I protest, the schoolmaster is exceeding fantastical; too too vain; too too vain: But we will put it, as they say, to *fortuna della guerra.* I wish you the peace of mind, most royal couplement. [*Exit* ARMADO.

King. Here is like to be a good presence of Worthies: He presents Hector of Troy; the swain, Pompey the Great; the parish curate, Alexander; Armado's page, Hercules; the pedant, Judas Maccabeus.

And if these four Worthies in their first show thrive,
These four will change habits, and present the other five.

Bir. There is five in the first show.

King. You are deceived; 'tis not so.

Bir. The pedant, the braggart, the hedge-priest, the fool, and the boy:—

Abate throw at novum,[32] and the whole world again

[32] A game at dice, properly called *novem quinque*, from the principal throws being *nine* and *five*. *Abate* obviously means, *leave out* or *except*.

Cannot pick out five such, take each one in his vein.

King. The ship is under sail, and here she comes amain.

Enter COSTARD *armed, for Pompey.*

Cost. "I Pompey am,"—

Boy. You lie, you are not he.

Cost. "I Pompey am,"—

Boy. With libbard's head on knee.[33]

Bir. Well said, old mocker: I must needs be friends with thee.

Cost. "I Pompey am, Pompey surnam'd the big,"—

Dum. The Great.

Cost. It is Great, sir;—"Pompey surnam'd the Great;

That oft in field, with targe and shield, did make my foe to sweat:

And travelling along this coast, I here am come by chance;

And lay my arms before the legs of this sweet lass of France."

If your ladyship would say, "Thanks, Pompey," I had done.

Prin. Great thanks, great Pompey.

Cost. 'Tis not so much worth; but I hope I was perfect: I made a little fault in "great."

Bir. My hat to a halfpenny, Pompey proves the best Worthy.

Enter Sir NATHANIEL *armed, for Alexander.*

Nath. "When in the world I liv'd, I was the world's commander;

[33] This alludes to the old heroic habits which, on the knees

By east, west, north, and south, I spread my conquering might:
My 'scutcheon plain declares that I am Alisander."

Boy. Your nose says, no, you are not; for it stands too right.[34]

Bir. Your nose smells, no, in this, most tender-smelling knight.[35]

Prin. The conqueror is dismay'd: Proceed, good Alexander.

Nath. "When in the world I liv'd, I was the world's commander;"—

Boy. Most true; 'tis right: you were so, Alisander.

Bir. Pompey the Great,—

Cost. Your servant, and Costard.

Bir. Take away the conqueror; take away Alisander.

Cost. [*To* NATH.] O! sir, you have overthrown Alisander the conqueror! You will be scrap'd out of the painted cloth for this: your lion, that holds his poll-ax sitting on a close-stool,[36] will be given to Ajax: he will be the ninth Worthy. A conqueror, and afeard to speak! run away for shame, Alisander. [NATH. *retires.*] There, an't shall please you; a foolish mild man; an honest man, look you, and soon dash'd! He is a marvellous good neighbour,

and shoulders, and sometimes by way of ornament the resemblance of a *leopard's* or lion's head.

[34] It should be remembered, to relish this joke, that the head of Alexander was obliquely placed on his shoulders.

[35] "Alexander's body had so sweet a smell of itselfe that all the apparell he wore next unto his body tooke thereof a passing delightful savour, as if it had been perfumed." *North's Plutarch.*

[36] This alludes to the arms given, in the old history of the Nine Worthies, to Alexander, "the which did bear geules a lion or seiante in a chayer, holding a battle-axe argent." There is a conceit of *Ajax* and *a jakes*, by no means uncommon at the time

in sooth; and a very good bowler: but, for Alisander, alas! you see how 'tis; — a little o'erparted: — But there are Worthies a-coming will speak their mind in some other sort.

Prin. Stand aside, good Pompey.

Enter HOLOFERNES *armed, for Judas, and* MOTH *armed, for Hercules.*

Hol. "Great Hercules is presented by this imp,
Whose club kill'd Cerberus, that three-headed *canis;*
And, when he was a babe, a child, a shrimp,
Thus did he strangle serpents in his *manus*:
Quoniam, he seemeth in minority;
Ergo, I come with this apology." —
Keep some state in thy *exit*, and vanish.

[*Exit* MOTH.

Hol. "Judas I am," —

Dum. A Judas!

Hol. Not Iscariot, sir. —
Judas I am, ycleped Maccabeus."

Dum. Judas Maccabeus clipt is plain Judas.

Bir. A kissing traitor: — How art thou prov'd Judas?

Hol. "Judas I am," —

Dum. The more shame for you, Judas

Hol. What mean you, sir?

Boy. To make Judas hang himself.

Hol. Begin, sir: you are my elder.

Bir Well follow'd: Judas was hang'd on an elder.

Hol. I will not be put out of countenance.

Bir Because thou hast no face.

Hol. What is this?

Boy. A cittern head.[37]

[37] The *cittern*, a musical instrument like a guitar, had usually

Dum. The head of a bodkin.

Bir. A death's face in a ring.

Lon. The face of an old Roman coin, scarce seen.

Boy. The pummel of Cæsar's faulchion.

Dum. The carv'd-bone face on a flask.[38]

Bir. St. George's half-cheek in a brooch.

Dum. Ay, and in a brooch of lead.

Bir. Ay, and worn in the cap of a tooth-drawer
And now, forward; for we have put thee in coun
tenance.

Hol. You have put me out of countenance.

Bir. False: we have given thee faces.

Hol. But you have out-fac'd them all.

Bir. An thou wert a lion, we would do so.

Boy. Therefore, as he is an ass, let him go.
And so adieu, sweet Jude! nay, why dost thou stay?

Dum. For the latter end of his name.

Bir. For the ass to the Jude; give it him: —
Jud-as, away.

Hol. This is not generous, not gentle, not humble.

Boy. A light for monsieur Judas! it grows dark,
he may stumble.

Prin. Alas, poor Maccabeus, how hath he been
baited!

Enter ARMADO *armed, for Hector.*

Bir. Hide thy head, Achilles: here comes Hec
tor in arms.

Dum. Though my mocks come home by me, I will now be merry.

King. Hector was but a Trojan[39] in respect of this.

a head grotesquely carved at the extremity of the neck and finger-board: hence these jests.

[38] That is, a soldier's powder-horn

[39] *Trojan* is supposed to have been a cant term for a thief It was, however, a familiar name for any equa. or inferior.

Boy. But is this Hector ?

Dum. I think Hector was not so clean-timber'd.

Lon. His leg is too big for Hector.

Dum. More calf, certain.

Boy. No ; he is best indued in the small.

Bir. This cannot be Hector.

Dum. He's a god or a painter ; for he makes faces.

Arm. "The armipotent Mars, of lances the almighty,
Gave Hector a gift," —

Dum. A gilt nutmeg.

Bir. A lemon.

Lon. Stuck with cloves.

Dum. No, cloven.

Arm. Peace !
"The armipotent Mars, of lances the almighty,
Gave Hector a gift, the heir of Ilion ;
A man so breath'd, that certain he would fight ye
From morn till night, out of his pavilion.
I am that flower," —

Dum. That mint.

Lon. That columbine.

Arm. Sweet lord Longaville, rein thy tongue.

Lon. I must rather give it the rein ; for it runs against Hector.

Dum. Ay, and Hector's a greyhound.

Arm. The sweet war-man is dead and rotten. sweet chucks, beat not the bones of the buried : when he breath'd, he was a man. — But I will forward with my device. [*To the* PRINCESS.] Sweet royalty, bestow on me the sense of hearing.

[BIRON *whispers* COSTARD.

Prin. Speak, brave Hector : we are much delighted.

Arm. I do adore thy sweet grace's slipper.

Boy. Loves her by the foot.

Dum. He may not by the yard.

Arm. "This Hector far surmounted Hannibal,"—

Cost. The party is gone; fellow Hector, she is gone; she is two months on her way.

Arm. What meanest thou?

Cost. Faith, unless you play the honest Trojan, the poor wench is cast away: she's quick; the child brags in her belly already: 'tis yours.

Arm. Dost thou infamonize me among potentates? thou shalt die.

Cost. Then shall Hector be whipp'd, for Jaquenetta that is quick by him; and hang'd, for Pompey that is dead by him.

Dum. Most rare Pompey!

Boy. Renowned Pompey!

Bir. Greater than great, great, great, great Pompey! Pompey the huge!

Dum. Hector trembles.

Bir. Pompey is moved:—More Ates,[40] more Ates; stir them on! stir them on!

Dum. Hector will challenge him.

Bir. Ay, if a' have no more man's blood in's belly than will sup a flea.

Arm. By the north pole, I do challenge thee.

Cost. I will not fight with a pole, like a northern man: I'll slash; I'll do it by the sword:—I pray you, let me borrow my arms again.

Dum. Room for the incensed Worthies.

Cost. I'll do it in my shirt.

Dum. Most resolute Pompey!

Moth. Master, let me take you a button-hole lower.

[40] That is, more instigation. Ate was the goddess of discord.

Do you not see, Pompey is uncasing for the combat? What mean you? you will lose your reputation.

Arm. Gentlemen, and soldiers, pardon me; I wil not combat in my shirt.

Dum. You may not deny it: Pompey hath made the challenge.

Arm. Sweet bloods, I both may and will.

Bir. What reasons have you for't?

Arm. The naked truth of it is, I have no shirt: I go woolward [41] for penance.

Boy. True, and it was enjoin'd him in Rome for want of linen; since when, I'll be sworn, he wore none but a dish-clout of Jaquenetta's; and that a' wears next his heart for a favour.

Enter MERCADE.

Mer. God save you, madam.

Prin. Welcome, Mercade;
But that thou interrupt'st our merriment.

Mer. I am sorry, madam; for the news I bring
Is heavy in my tongue. The king your father—

Prin. Dead, for my life.

Mer. Even so; my tale is told.

Bir. Worthies, away: the scene begins to cloud.

Arm. For mine own part, I breathe free breath: I have seen the day of wrong through the little hole of discretion,[42] and I will right myself like a soldier. [*Exeunt Worthies.*

King. How fares your majesty?

Prin. Boyet, prepare: I will away to-night.

King. Madam, not so; I do beseech you, stay.

[41] That is, clothed in wool, and not in linen; a penance often enjoined in times of superstition.

[42] Armado probably means to say in his affected style that he had discovered he was wronged. "One may see day at a little hole," is a proverb

Prin. Prepare, I say.—I thank you, gracious lords,
For all your fair endeavours; and entreat,
Out of a new-sad soul, that you vouchsafe
In your rich wisdom to excuse, or hide,
The liberal opposition of our spirits:
If over-boldly we have borne ourselves
In the converse of breath, your gentleness
Was guilty of it.— Farewell, worthy lord!
A heavy heart bears not a nimble tongue:
Excuse me so, coming too short of thanks
For my great suit so easily obtain'd.

King. The extreme haste of time extremely forms
All causes to the purpose of his speed;
And often, at his very loose,[43] decides
That which long process could not arbitrate:
And though the mourning brow of progeny
Forbid the smiling courtesy of love
The holy suit which fain it would convince;[44]
Yet, since love's argument was first on foot,
Let not the cloud of sorrow justle it
From what it purpos'd; since, to wail friends lost,
Is not by much so wholesome, profitable,
As to rejoice at friends but newly found.

Prin. I understand you not: my griefs are dull.

Bir. Honest plain words best pierce the ear of grief;
And by these badges understand the king.
For your fair sakes have we neglected time,
Play'd foul play with our oaths: your beauty, ladies,
Hath much deform'd us, fashioning our humours
Even to the opposed end of our intents;

[43] *Loose* may mean at the moment of his parting, that is, of his *getting loose* or away from us.

[44] That is, which it fain would succeed in obtaining.

And what in us hath seem'd ridiculous, —
As love is full of unbefitting strains;
All wanton as a child, skipping, and vain;
Form'd by the eye, and therefore, like the eye,
Full of strange shapes, of habits, and of forms,
Varying in subjects as the eye doth roll
To every varied object in his glance:
Which party-coated presence of loose love
Put on by us, if, in your heavenly eyes,
Have misbecome our oaths and gravities,
Those heavenly eyes, that look into these faults,
Suggested[45] us to make. Therefore, ladies,
Our love being yours, the error that love makes
Is likewise yours: we to ourselves prove false,
By being once false forever to be true
To those that make us both, — fair ladies, you:
And even that falsehood, in itself a sin,
Thus purifies itself, and turns to grace.

Prin. We have receiv'd your letters full of love;
Your favours, the ambassadors of love:
And, in our maiden counsel, rated them
At courtship, pleasant jest, and courtesy,
As bombast,[46] and as lining to the time:
But more devout than this, in our respects,
Have we not been; and therefore met your loves
In their own fashion, like a merriment.

Dum. Our letters, madam, show'd much more than jest.

Lon. So did our looks.

[45] Tempted.

[46] Thus, in Dekker's Satiromastix: "You shall swear not to *combast* out a new play with the old *linings* of jests." *Bombast* was the stuffing or *wadding* of doublets. Stubbs, in his Anatomie of Abuses, speaks of their being "stuffed with four, five, or six pounds of *bombast* at least." The word originally signified cotton, from the Latin *bombax*, this material being principally used for wadding or stuffing.

Ros. We did not quote them so

King. Now, at the latest minute of the hour,
Grant us your loves.

Prin. A time, methinks, too short
To make a world-without-end bargain in.
No, no, my lord, your grace is perjur'd much,
Full of dear guiltiness: and therefore this: —
If for my love (as there is no such cause)
You will do aught, this shall you do for me:
Your oath I will not trust; but go with speed
To some forlorn and naked hermitage,
Remote from all the pleasures of the world;
There stay, until the twelve celestial signs
Have brought about their annual reckoning:
If this austere insociable life
Change not your offer made in heat of blood;
If frosts, and fasts, hard lodging, and thin weeds,
Nip not the gaudy blossoms of your love,
But that it bear this trial, and last love;
Then, at the expiration of the year,
Come challenge, challenge me by these deserts,
And by this virgin palm, now kissing thine,
I will be thine; and, till that instant, shut
My woful self up in a mourning house;
Raining the tears of lamentation,
For the remembrance of my father's death.
If this thou do deny, let our hands part;
Neither intitled in the other's heart.

King. If this, or more than this, I would deny,
To flatter up these powers of mine with rest,
The sudden hand of death close up mine eye!
Hence ever then my heart is in thy breast.

Bir. And what to me, my love? and what to me?

Ros. You must be purged too; your sins are rank:

You are attaint with faults and perjury;
Therefore, if you my favour mean to get,
A twelvemonth shall you spend, and never rest,
But seek the weary beds of people sick.[47]

Dum. But what to me, my love? but what to me?

Kath. A wife!—A beard, fair health, and honesty;
With three-fold love I wish you all these three.

Dum. O! shall I say, I thank you, gentle wife?

Kath. Not so, my lord:—A twelvemonth and a day
I'll mark no words that smooth-fac'd wooers say:
Come when the king doth to my lady come,
Then, if I have much love, I'll give you some.

Dum. I'll serve thee true and faithfully till then.

Kath. Yet swear not, lest you be forsworn again.

Lon. What says Maria?

Mar. At the twelvemonth's end,
I'll change my black gown for a faithful friend.

Lon. I'll stay with patience; but the time is long

Mar. The liker you; few taller are so young.

Bir. Studies my lady? mistress, look on me;
Behold the window of my heart, mine eye,

[47] The justice of Coleridge's remarks upon these lines is obvious enough: "There can be no doubt indeed about the propriety of expunging this speech of Rosaline's; it soils the very page that retains it. But I do not agree with Warburton and others in striking out the preceding line also. It is quite in Biron's character, and, Rosaline not answering it immediately, Dumain takes up the question for him, and, after he and Longaville are answered, Biron, with evident propriety, says,—'*Studies* my lady?'" &c Nevertheless, we would not venture to strike it out; though we have little doubt it was retained by mistake when the Poet rewrote the play; and perhaps the two speeches may be taken as an apt illustration of the difference between the original and the augmented copies. H.

What humble suit attends thy answer there:
Impose some service on me for thy love.

Ros. Oft have I heard of you, my lord Biron,
Before I saw you: and the world's large tongue
Proclaims you for a man replete with mocks;
Full of comparisons and wounding flouts;
Which you on all estates will execute,
That lie within the mercy of your wit:
To weed this wormwood from your fruitful brain
And, therewithal, to win me, if you please,
(Without the which I am not to be won,)
You shall this twelvemonth term from day to day
Visit the speechless sick, and still converse
With groaning wretches; and your task shall be,
With all the fierce endeavour of your wit,
To enforce the pained impotent to smile.

Bir. To move wild laughter in the throat of death?
It cannot be; it is impossible:
Mirth cannot move a soul in agony.

Ros. Why, that's the way to choke a gibing spirit,
Whose influence is begot of that loose grace,
Which shallow laughing hearers give to fools.
A jest's prosperity lies in the ear
Of him that hears it, never in the tongue
Of him that makes it: then, if sickly ears,
Deaf'd with the clamors of their own dear[48] groans,
Will hear your idle scorns, continue them,
And I will have you, and that fault withal;
But, if they will not, throw away that spirit,
And I shall find you empty of that fault,
Right joyful of your reformation.

Bir. A twelvemonth? well, befall what will befall,
I'll jest a twelvemonth in an hospital.

[48] See Twelfth Night, Act v. sc. 1, note 3.

Prin. [*To the* KING.] Ay, sweet my lord; and so I take my leave.

King. No, madam; we will bring you on your way.

Bir. Our wooing doth not end like an old play;
Jack hath not Jill: these ladies' courtesy
Might well have made our sport a comedy.

King. Come, sir, it wants a twelvemonth and a day.
And then 'twill end.

Bir. That's too long for a play.

Enter ARMADO.

Arm. Sweet majesty, vouchsafe me, —

Prin. Was not that Hector?

Dum. The worthy knight of Troy.

Arm. I will kiss thy royal finger, and take leave. I am a votary; I have vow'd to Jaquenetta to hold the plough for her sweet love three years. But, most esteemed greatness, will you hear the dialogue that the two learned men have compiled, in praise of the owl and the cuckoo? it should have followed in the end of our show.

King. Call them forth quickly: we will do so.

Arm. Holla! approach.

Enter HOLOFERNES, *Sir* NATHANIEL, MOTH, COSTARD, *and others.*

This side is Hiems, winter; this Ver, the spring; the one maintained by the owl, the other by the cuckoo. Ver, begin.

Song.

I.

Spring. When daisies pied, and violets blue,
And lady-smocks all silver-white,
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue,[49]
Do paint the meadows with delight,
The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men, for thus sings he:
Cuckoo,
Cuckoo, cuckoo, — O word of fear!
Unpleasing to a married ear.

II.

When shepherds pipe on oaten straws,
And merry larks are ploughmen's clocks;
When turtles tread, and rooks, and daws,
And maidens bleach their summer smocks,
The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men, for thus sings he:
Cuckoo,
Cuckoo, cuckoo, — O word of fear!
Unpleasing to a married ear.

III.

Winter When icicles hang by the wall.
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,[50]
And Tom bears logs into the hall.
And milk comes frozen home in pail;

[49] Gerarde in his Herbal, 1597, says, that the *flos cuculi carda mine*, &c., are called "in English *cuckoo flowers*, in Norfolk Canterbury bells, and at Namptwich, in Cheshire, *Ladie-smocks*." In Lyte's Herbal, 1578, it is remarked, that *cowslips* are, in French of some called *coqun* prime vere, and brayes de *coqun*. *Herbe a coqu* was one of the old French names for the *cowslip*, which it seems probable is the flower here meant.

[50] A similar expression occurs in one of South's Sermons: "So

When blood is nipp'd, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
To-who,
To-whit, to-who, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.[51]

IV.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
And Marian's nose looks red and raw,
When roasted crabs[52] hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
To-who,
To-whit, to-who, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

Arm. The words of Mercury are harsh after the songs of Apollo. You, that way; we, this way.

[*Exeunt.*

that the king, for any thing that he has to do in these matters, may sit and *blow his nails*; for use them otherwise he cannot." H.

[51] To *keel*, or *kele*, is to *cool*. Latterly it seems to have been applied particularly to the *cooling* of boiling liquor. To *keel* the pot is to *cool* it by stirring the pottage with the ladle to prevent the *boiling over*.

[52] The *crab-apple*, which used to be roasted and put hissing hot into a bowl of ale, previously enriched with toast, and spice, and sugar. How much this was relished in old times, may be guessed by those who appreciate the virtues of apple-toddy. Warner thus speaks of a shepherd:

"And with the sun doth folde againe;
Then, jogging home betime,
He *turnes a crab*, or tunes a round,
Or sings some merrie ryme" H.

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